

LETTERS TO
MY NEPHEW

by
Anthony Farley

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NEPHEW

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BY
ANTHONY FARLEY

EDITED BY
S. G. HOBSON

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To

RUSSELL ANTON BERTRAM HOBSON

R.A.M.C.

SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE

1007717

FOREWORD

AS Anthony Farley lounged on the verandah of the Tivoli Hotel at Panama, a young English bride of his acquaintance sat down beside him, dropping on her lap a number of sealed envelopes and twice as many picture post-cards. He noticed that the handwriting was large and sprawling, the joint product of a J pen and a tennis wrist. He thought of his mother's finely pointed Italian style, pondering in his gently cynical way whether the difference spelt any change in the eternal feminine.

"Thank goodness, I've got 'em all ticked off," said she.

"You seem to have remembered the whole bridal party," said Anthony.

"Rather! Wouldn't do to forget any of 'em; got to live among 'em when we get back, you know."

The *insouciance* of this gay and irresponsible flutter-bird roused in Anthony a vague, undefined disquietude. He suddenly remembered that his hair was turning grey; that his movements were now more leisurely than formerly; that creature comforts were rather agreeable and more considered.

"I hope you never write a letter you wouldn't like your grandchildren to read," he said, with a touch of severity.

"You *are* an old-fashioned dear," she gurgled, through a gale of laughter. "I should like to read some of *your* letters!"

"It sounds like a challenge," said Anthony, smiling.

Out of this trivial colloquy grew these letters.

They were written in spare moments anywhere between Cartagena and Belize ; on banana farms, in mahogany camps, on sloops and schooners as they lay becalmed ; but mainly in British Honduras. The writer has told stories about the people living in this little outpost of Empire, stories that bear some semblance of truth. But that surely is the business of fiction.

Through an indiscretion of mine, the editor of *The New Age* heard of Anthony Farley's letters and promptly seized them for his readers' amusement. They seemed a little frivolous contrasted with the dynamic appeals and mordant criticisms one reads in that paper. Curiously enough *The New Age* readers liked them and asked that they be put into some permanent form.

If his touch was light, Anthony Farley nevertheless regarded life seriously, frequently lamenting the lack of solid thinking and grim-set purpose which he thought an unfortunate mark of the modern young man. Since then, alas ! much water has passed under the mill—water fatefully crimsoned with the blood of countless youths. That will change the young man, who, returning from the Front, must meet difficulties to temper his moral courage and problems to search out openings in the armour of his fortitude. I suspect that Anthony Farley regarded this young man, whoever he be, as his nephew.

S. G. H.

LONDON

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LETTERS TO MY NEPHEW

I: ON GOING DOWN

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I have received your letter in which you tell me that, after you have taken your degree, you would prefer some useful occupation ; that the Bar has no attraction for you ; that an academic career would bore you stiff. Very good ; please yourself, my dear boy, and, if you do it thoroughly, you will please me. (By the way, times have surely changed : you don't even mention the Church as a possible field for the exercise of your genius. They tell me that this war will revivify religion.)

Just now, however, I am more concerned with your question as to how you stand financially. You tell me that you don't want to live in a fool's paradise and you don't want to sponge on me. A very direct young man ! And quite right too. I am glad that in starting out in life you are prepared to face manfully your financial position, whether it be comfortable or the reverse. So, at long last, I must tell you something about yourself that has had to wait the appropriate moment. It also involves a confession on my part that I have been guilty of a breach of trust, for which, I dare say, you could put me in gaol.

You came to me, with old Nurse (she's very feeble—I tell her heroic cock-and-bull stories about you), on the day we buried your father. You were four

years old. You seemed to me like any other kid. I wasn't very keen about having you; in fact, your invasion of my bachelor arrangements was a nuisance. But we were, and are, all that remained from two pairs of grandparents. I hadn't the moral courage to pack you off to some respectable establishment where orphans are tended with more or less kindness and attention. Nurse, too, had bullied me from the days of my petticoats. Come to think of it, I don't remember her consulting me about it. She suddenly loomed large as the arbiter of our family morality, and so toted you along, choosing the best room in the house for her precious charge. Your father, of course, dreamily assumed that I should be something more than a guardian.

Mention of his name brings me back to my crime. Near the end, he handed me the key of his safe. "There's £1000 there for Geordie; put him through a good university." When I searched the safe I found the money. It was all in bearer bonds—mostly French. For diddling Somerset House there's nothing like bearer bonds. So I pouched the plunder, sold the other effects, kept your father's books (they are now yours—mostly rubbish of the Leslie Stephen-Humphry Ward-Professor Drummond order), and found myself possessed of funds amounting to precisely £1274 12s. 4d. I calculated that you would go to Cambridge at the age of nineteen. So I had to keep you for fifteen years and turn you out at the age of, say, twenty-three or twenty-four, a full-fledged M.A. Nothing less than that would have gratified your father. Money invested at 5 per cent. compound interest doubles itself in

fourteen years. Note the phrase "doubles itself." By its own unaided exertions it doubles itself. Isn't money clever? The shillings spread themselves out to the circumference of florins; 'thin 'uns' grow into 'thick 'uns'; £5 notes mysteriously 'split.' Marvellous middle-class alchemy! No vulgar workman with stubbed fingers plying at the bench, no shortened square-toed miner, picking his tonnage in the gloom and grime, no hectic clerk with hideous tie, no homeless, wretched A.B. in the fo'c'sle has aught to do with this strange process. No, sir, it "doubles itself." This is the self-reliance that has made us a great nation. Money doubles itself; we double our fortunes; we then cut some figure in the world, grabbing as much of it as we can. *A propos*, did you ever hear of the story of Commodore Vanderbilt? As he was on the gang-plank of his yacht, somebody asked him where he was going. "Round the world," said he, "and if I like it I'll buy it." Was I then to put out this money at interest or spend it upon your clothes, your food, your schooling, and all those other things that boys expect? A decision was not urgent; it could wait a year or more.

Meantime, I began to take an interest in you. You were the son of my brother and were entrusted to my keeping; I had this money to spend upon you. Of course, if I were Mr H. G. Wells I could spin a pseudo-psychological yarn about my approach to you. It wouldn't be true; but it would be amusing. Thus:

"In all my private affairs, and even in the pursuit of my public activities, aimed, as you know, at the

reconstruction of England on a more orderly basis, compacted of clear thinking and goodwill, I seldom missed tea at the club, with a rubber of whist or a hundred at billiards. I was one of a group of cronies who rather relied upon each other for this enjoyable relaxation. They were all prosperous men of the world whose good-breeding and *savoir-faire* stirred within me complacent memories of earlier days when my origin would have been instantly discovered by my boots. It took me many years before I acquired the style and material of dress in vogue among the wealthier classes. Even longer before I passed through what might be called dandiacal adolescence to that stage of *négligé* which is the true mark of those upper circles to which I now belonged and upon whose conversion I was set. It chanced that, in my many preoccupations, I had forgotten one of our public holidays. I walked into the club, and upon collecting my letters (how dreary is casual correspondence!) Thompson, the hall porter, told me that the club was deserted. Stuffing my letters into my despatch-case, I became conscious of a blank. My thoughts travelled far beyond the next two vacant hours to a quickly deepening sense of a grim hiatus in my more intimate life. . . .

“A hansom cab brought me to my own door. Calling for tea, I walked into your nursery and found you with your toys. You were building a house with square and oblong bricks. With childish prattle you invited my help. I watched you with a kindling curiosity. My far-flung schemes of social regeneration had assumed a certain degree of universal intelligence—a sort of spiritual and mental

common-denominator. Suddenly I saw that your childish ways and whimsies must be the foundation of a really permanent and beneficent change. The nurse came for you to bathe you, give you your evening meal and put you to bed. I crossed the passage to my study, my brain scintillating with thoughts of a new educational system. I had seen a miracle. Mankind in the making. . . .

“ Luckily or unluckily, I had no engagement that evening. A simple dinner (when alone it is prudent to impress economy upon the servants—a lesson the middle classes have yet to learn from us), and I sat down to work. My study is my castle. In it are my treasures. Over the door is a bust of Lord Northcliffe, whose ebullient vitality and prescient appreciation of national passions and tendencies have yet to be understood by his critics. A signed photograph of G. B. S. is mounted in a panel of the chimney mantel, while opposite is a composite photo of Sidney and Beatrice Webb. A Guild Socialist to whom I showed it murmured, ‘Mankind in the unmaking.’ I have travelled far since those photos were mounted, but I cherish only friendliness for these interesting, if futile, Fabians. Widely apart though we now are, I like to think that I have always treated them with a courtesy and urbaneness very pleasing to my self-conceit. But work was impossible. A restlessness, an incoming tide of nervous unquiet, set me tramping up and down my study—a large room, once the studio of a famous painter. Then my thoughts went back to you. I wished that you were my own son. The wish grew into a swift, tempestuous current

of emotion, tingling with alternating pains and perturbations, poignant, delicious, disturbing. I realized that Nature can call through the step-children of this disorderly world—a call to effort, to duty, to the deeper things that transcend purely objective life. . . .

“ My pacing stopped mechanically at my desk. I took up my diary. To-morrow was important. I must go into the City early. There was a directors’ meeting at 11 o’clock, when we must finally decide about Adams. A nasty affair that. I could only hope that we would steer clear of the law-courts. At 1 o’clock, lunch with Templeton, to discuss the Westralian Conduit scheme—a biggish thing, requiring diplomatic handling. That would take me to 2.30. Then I must hurry back to my office to complete my correspondence. At 4.30 there was a paper at the Royal Statistical Society, ‘ The Proportion of Tubercles to the Varying Densities of the Square Yard of Factory Space,’ diagrams of immense value and probably a discussion of some significance. I must dine at 6.30 to preside at the Fabian at 8. A lecture on ‘ Preparing for Maternity,’ by Mrs Christabel Cross. Altogether a fruitful day was promised. I felt tired, switched off the lights and walked down the passage. Your nursery door was shut and again came the vision. I thought of you as my son, lying in your mother’s arms, in a room filled with all those feminine fripperies and utensils which constitute the perennial charm of young motherhood. I thought of my own room, austere untidy. Almost deluded by the vividness of my imagining, I stole up furtively to your door. . . .”

Wellsian fiction, my dear George, remains fiction, and not palatable at that. My feeling was too simple and elemental for fiction. I had no special affection for you, but it was interesting to me to speculate what the thousand pounds would do for you. Obviously nothing, unless we could keep you healthy and see to your physical growth. Nurse and I, between us, did this. Affection comes with knowledge; the bonds grow gradually. I think, too, that it is the child, helpless, confiding, and often charming, who starts it. A time came when you brought your childish troubles to me; a time came when your questions could not be stayed or evaded; a time came when school called you; a time came when I watched the doctor stand over you, testing by your tremulous pulse whether you would come back to us from an eerie dreamland, which we could not even vaguely surmise by your little parched lips parted as though in wonder at strange sights. A time came when you went away to a boarding-school and I missed you. A time came when I felt it wise to warn you against a certain secret vice. Yesterday I turned up your letter in reply to mine:

“DEAR UNCLE,

“I would not do such an ungentlemanly thing. Last term a boy was expelled for it.

“Last Saturday we played Wolverton and won 5 to 2. I played half-back and kicked a goal. In the train going back, Old Chivers said that if I used my shoulders less and my feet more I might become a decent player. He is a beast for ragging a fellow, but a ripping full-back.

“ Templeton has a camera. His pater gave £2 for it. He wants to buy a collection of something and would sell it to me for £1. I have only 7s. 6d. left.

“ When vac. comes and you meet me at Euston will you take me home in one of those new autocar things? It would be spiffing.

“ Please let me know about the camera as I promised to let Templeton know.

“ Your affectionate nephew,

“ GEORDIE.”

In all our vicissitudes, you observe that a time comes; sooner or later *the* time, the supreme moment, also surely comes to pass.

And the time has come to tell you of my malfeasance. Have all the divagations of this letter led you to forget it? But I want you to understand my whole attitude, and I think that probably this long way round is the shortest cut home. When I began to divagate (forgive me if my spelling is wrong, but the word tickles my fancy) I was left pondering whether I would put out the whole or the main part of your legacy at compound interest and keep a ledger account between us. Apart from the fact that I hate book-keeping—the job is fit only for Eurasians and spinsters—other considerations came to mind. Where would you be if, after you had taken your degree, your legacy were spent? I had seen too many instances of young men just down, whose last stiver had gone. I saw them drift about, taking up odd jobs in journalism, acting as private secretaries to aspiring and perspiring politicians, tutoring young fools on the Continent, going into

the Church, without religious convictions ("untouched by grace," as your grandfather would have put it), teaching at third-rate schools, and generally licking the boots of circumstance. Your innocent father had unintentionally placed you in jeopardy and put upon me a heavy responsibility. For it was clear to me that you must be provided not only for your university career but for another five years after. How many thousand guileless parents are there who think that, in sending their sons to Oxford or Cambridge, they give them a training for their future work? The truth is that a true university life trains its students in intellectual receptivity, but never by any chance for the actualities of life. No doubt things have changed since then. Your engineering school, for example, is rated quite highly by some technical friends of mine.

To cut the story short, I convinced myself that, if we were to interpret your father's wishes generously and not meanly, a thousand pounds was inadequate. So I determined to do a flutter on the Stock Exchange with your money and damn the consequences. If the worst came to the worst, I would find the money myself. I have friends in the City who are on the inside track of things, and I also know (they have since gone bankrupt or gone to prison) a number of company promoters. Between these two sets of thieves I felt it possible to do something profitable. And I brought it off, my boy. Not, however, without anxious moments. At one stage of the game there stood £57 to the credit of your account and a monstrous mush of scrip. At the right

moment the financial press (well sugared) began to boom the various stocks, and I promptly sold out at a Jew's profit. Several times did I repeat the operation, choosing my own time, for there was no hurry, no urgency, to realize. I have made up the final reckoning. I started gambling on your account, eighteen years ago, with something over £1000. I am handing to you, in good securities, £15,372. I have instructed Ellison to transfer all this stock to you.

If the Germans do not send the whole demnition pow-wow to perdition, you go down from Cambridge with an assured income of something over £700 a year. Your father and I started with nothing. I wonder whether, from that very fact, we were, at your age, better men than you. But I do not regret putting you into a financially secure position before you have won your spurs. In my young days, the lack of h'apence was a torment and a degradation. It hardened me and gave me self-reliance. But I lost much that was precious. The struggle killed your father. He was a gentle man. We had very little in common. But as he lay dying, a great hatred of the senseless struggle that had sapped his strength surged up in me.

I derive comfort from the thought that changes are pending ; that the grinding of the faces of the poor shows signs of working on creaking pivots and rusty hinges. God's mill is also grinding. Wait !

Your assured income won't carry you very far, my dear boy. There is much I want to tell you. To-night I am tired and a little sad. I have ceased

to be your guardian. From now on you are free and independent. I can only hold you by my affection and by whatever spiritual and worldly wisdom the gods have given to me.

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

II: THE CHOICE OF A PROFESSION

DEAR GEORGE,

When you wrote that you wanted to follow some useful occupation and expressly excluded the law and the academy, you inferentially condemned both these professions as useless. You probably meant that they were more ornamental than useful. I, of course, understand that you did not include the general teaching profession in such a sweeping censure. You meant becoming a don. Teaching is almost the oldest and certainly the most noble of all the professions. It is the foundation of law, medicine, and priestcraft. The English attitude toward education puzzles and irritates me. Throughout Europe, the teacher is not only immensely respected but ranks high. In Scotland and Wales, teaching is properly regarded as an honourable and eminently useful profession. In Ireland, too, I have heard old men speak with awe and gratitude of the "hedge teacher," who, braving the law of the Ascendancy, taught young Irishmen the rudiments of knowledge, led them on to Latin (the language of their Church), and so opened the doors to a curious medley of classical tradition and superstition. In England, we put our teachers upon the same financial level as our policemen. We segregate them in very inferior colleges, isolated from university life, and generally treat them as a negligible factor in our social economy. The teachers, hampered by an increasing female preponderance, are partly to blame for showing such a shocking lack of backbone; but the true cause lies deeper and will be found in our national

conception of education as an instrument of discipline rather than an awakening and emancipating force. I am told that the formation of the Teachers' Register may lead to more unity of purpose among the teachers and an excess of power, both economic and political. For the life of me, I cannot understand why the teaching profession does not constitute itself into a trust or a guild, and run the whole educational machine. Andrew Carnegie could teach them how to do it in ten minutes. He could ; but he wouldn't. He knows better. Anyhow, we have put pedagogy to sleep or to death, and, pending its sure and glorious resurrection, we may dismiss teaching as an occupation quite unfitted for a gentleman.

I have read somewhere that, legally, a gentleman must belong to one of the liberal professions, or possess £300 a year without working for it. By this token, my boy, your £700 makes you a gentleman.

You could become doubly a gentleman if you went to the Bar. I do not suppose that you would expect me to give you a double tail to your name, Esq., Esq., but, as you decline to be a barrister, my little conceit is superfluous. But don't run away with the idea that the legal profession is useless. Where would your £700 a year be if we had neither law nor lawyers? When Parnell's divorce case stirred the virtuous public, a cynic remarked that now was the time for all adulterers to stand shoulder to shoulder. And if I do not mistake the signs of the times, when the more intelligent labourers are openly adopting the heresy that labour is not a commodity to be bought and sold like pots and

potatoes, that it is a human and therefore a sacred thing, it will soon be high time for the possessing classes to stand shoulder to shoulder in defence of their possessions, their hearths, and their homes, not forgetting those unhappy widows and orphans whose little lost legacies will subject them to all the horrors and miseries of Belgian refugees. When that day comes, the lawyers will be the first line of defence. I can tell you the whole rigmarole. First, a series of prosecutions for conspiracy. The first victim ought to be the editor of *The New Age*, the paper which first denounced the commodity theory. But conspiracy prosecutions are necessarily limited in their scope. You can't put away the whole labouring population under the law of conspiracy. The next step will be a carefully conceived and almost universal lock-out. If that fails (as it will) then riots will be engineered—in your innocence, do you suppose that our governing classes are incapable of employing agents-provocateurs?—and so we will call out the military.

Thus far I have written with glib certainty. First, the lawyers; next the police; finally, the military. But will the military respond? I wonder! Will they fire on old comrades? Will they not rather fire upon their own officers? They are learning more than we imagine on the plains of Flanders, in the Inferno of Ypres. I saw a private letter the other day. It came from a German trader in Hamburg to his brother, a naturalized British subject. "All our officers have not been shot by the enemy," it said. Perhaps, in this way, the Germans may finally win the war for us.

I come back to the profession of law. Believe me, it is not ignoble. It gets into ruts. Place and power and emoluments often, but not always, blind it to the finer issues. It is not peculiar in this respect. Taking it by and large, its history is greater, more humane, more ennobling than is the history of the Church. In my own experience, I have always found lawyers more susceptible to ideas than clergymen. They are more human. The true confessional to-day is the lawyer's office. No doubt it fishes in dirty waters. A dear friend of mine, on going down from Cambridge, went to the Bar. In all his life, he had been fastidious, fending off all nauseous things. His first brief compelled him to put questions to a miserable girl that would make a priest blush in the confession box. He quickly procured an official berth. It is a truism, but not a platitude, that law is a double-edged weapon. It has been, and may be, the palladium of our liberties ; it has been, and may be, an instrument of oppression, of despotism, and of torture. Let us see to it that it does not become the monopoly of bullies and mercenaries. The advocate, even to-day, is not permitted to take a 'fee' ; nor may he sue for his 'honorarium.' You might do worse, my boy, than go to the Bar.

I do not forget, too, that our Empire, if not founded on law, is maintained by law. As a Colonial, of sorts, I certainly ought to remember it. Wherever our flag flies, we impose our law. In the little track of tropical territory from which I derive my poor sustenance, six thousand miles from your snug study, we insist upon rigid obedience to

law. It reminds me of the little epic of Eleuterio Hernandez.

About a mile from my plantation is the little wooden house that is at once our police station, post office, telegraph and telephone station. There, as magistrate, I sometimes dispense justice. If the local prison is full, I am very merciful. If we want prison labour, then, oddly enough, I am impressed with the necessity of vindicating the majesty of the law. There still hangs on the wall a soiled and frayed print, announcing in English and Spanish, and signed by the Chief of the Police, that five hundred dollars will be paid to anybody, not a policeman, for the body, alive or dead, of Eleuterio Hernandez. Then follows a description of the little ruffian. We are told that he is a *chiclé* contractor ; that he is very short, being but five feet four inches ; that his *sombrero* is generally worn well down over his forehead ; that he habitually frowns ; and so on, over about six inches of printed matter. Much more fascinating is an attached photograph. An amateur affair quite clearly, but deadly for purposes of identification. He stands beside a chair, the back of which is almost up to his elbow. To lend beauty to the scene, an *antimacassar* is stretched over the chair. Hernandez, in a white duck suit, a heavy watch-chain crossing from one breast-pocket to the other, stares gloomily on the ground, as though lost in the immensity of his thoughts. Five hundred dollars, by the gold standard, for him, alive or dead.

You ask what is a *chiclé* contractor ? *Chiclé* is the basis of American chewing-gum. (A rascally chemist has recently discovered a synthetic sub-

stitute.) It is obtained by bleeding the sapodilla tree. It oozes out, a thick, sticky, repulsive-looking stuff. The Belize merchants engage men to go into the bush to collect chicle. They advance money to these men, who are known as 'contractors.' They, in their turn, engage a gang of assistants on monthly wages and rations. No light task, I assure you. The bush is almost impenetrable. You cut your way, yard by yard, with machetes. Snakes lurk at the roots. Tread on one and say your prayers. "What happens, happens," say these chiqueros; they shrug their shoulders and press forward. Mosquitoes impregnate them with fever. "What happens, happens." The dry season wanes all too quickly; there is yet much to be done. Press on! All too soon come the torrential rains. "What happens, happens." Let us get back to see how much we have earned. There are girls and rum waiting for us.

In this way Hernandez lived. Flour and bacon and beans; beans and bacon and flour. Sometimes they catch a deer or a peccary; sometimes they shoot a pigeon. Thus did he arrive on his last journey, thinking perhaps of that back-yard where he was photographed standing beside the chair with the antimacassar. More likely was he thinking of the girl inside, who was waiting for him, pondering subtle questions to probe her fidelity. To-morrow he would interview the merchants. He had reckoned it all up. There was a good fifteen hundred dollars due to him. When he had paid off his crew, he would be at least eight hundred to the good. The races were coming on. He knew every pony

in the colony. With luck he would double his earnings.

Next day he interviews the merchants. Curious! They meet him with long faces. Impassive, he waits. He is puzzled. They tell him that he is yet in their debt. He laughs; it is a bad joke. Come, pay up! His men are waiting round the corner, on the pounce. The girls are waiting. At the store near by are bracelets and bangles and hairpins, wonderful hairpins of tortoise-shell bordered with gold filigree and set with stones. They will sparkle in the black hair of the expectant señoritas. Come, pay up! At Antonio's there is a round table where are dominoes and cards and some old rum that rushes through the veins like fire through the pine-ridge. It is no joke. Our worthy merchants produce their ledgers and their journals and their diaries and their stock-books. Yes; they are all in order, duly checked. Look! Against every item is a little tick. That proves it "for sure." Not a doubt about it. Instead of fifteen hundred dollars due from them to him, the boot is on the other foot. What tricks has he been up to? Sending the stuff across the frontier, they dare swear. He must pay up. No nonsense about that! He is cornered by the books in front of him and by his men, habitually suspicious, behind. Hot rage and resentment burn within him. Revenge beckons. Nothing to be done at the moment. Lucky for somebody that he is unarmed. He walks out, muttering that he has been robbed. I do not know what he says to his men.

In the little frontier town of El Cayo, happy hunting ground for Mexican and Guatemalan ruffians

and smugglers, Hernandez has friends. Two days' struggle against an unfriendly current and he is among them. A few days later our worthy merchants hear of his arrival there. By their sacred books, securely locked away each night in strong safes with combination keys, he owes them fifteen hundred dollars, measured by gold bars, in the bank cellars of Washington and London and Paris—civilized gold. They call upon the law to obtain for them their due. A writ, with all appropriate formality, is issued. Finally, a constable at El Cayo, with this very writ in his hand, approaches Hernandez. What can he know of the subtle distinctions between civil and criminal law? To him, a warrant and a writ are identical. It is, to him, the heavy hand of Pax Britannica seeking to get him out of the way, so that those rascally merchants shall not be found out. Doubtless they have already squared the Department of Justice. Anyhow, what has justice to do with poor men, save only to oppress them? He shoots with swift, sure aim. The dead policeman lies on the ground, clutching in his fast-stiffening fingers the fatal writ.

While outraged justice gasps, running hither and thither, shouting through the telephone, frenziedly drafting reports, Hernandez seeks the shelter of the sombre forest. There is a hue and cry. He instinctively senses it. Mercedes, her eyes no longer bright, nostrils tightly drawn, lips curving downward, comes to Cayo. Mysterious parcels of food and cartridges reach the fugitive. The days grow into weeks. Justice, still outraged, now slackens

her paces. Time is on her side ; Hernandez will not always remain invisible. Mercedes brightens. There is a bridle track over the Guatemalan mountains. It is watched night and day. Policemen are known to sleep on duty. Zigzagging to the north-west is another track into Mexico. *Quien sabe ?* But the tired eyes of Hernandez look not west, but east. He longs for the embraces of his Mercedes. And he waits, with revenge's untiring patience, for any one or two, or more, of those Belize thieves to come to Cayo. He hides near the river, so near that he can hear the almost silent swish of the paddles. Along the river is a narrow turf road. He thinks he hears the muffled pad-pad of ponies' hoofs. He looks out. Yes ; three ponies and three riders canter toward him. The middle man, *Dios !* what luck ! is one of them. His gun rests on a branch. The riders draw level with the rifle's sight. The bullet flies to its billet. Hernandez moves back into the thick bush. He hears a violent galloping and smiles happily.

Mercedes proves a too powerful magnet. On a dimly moonlit night he creeps into Cayo. Mercedes, sleeping under her mosquito net, feels a hand stealing up to her cheek. She seizes it and passionately kisses it. He moves in beside her. The hours seem minutes. Daylight breaks suddenly ; there is no twilight. In ten minutes the sun is up. Quick ! Hernandez, quick ! Too late ! He looks down the barrel of a rifle. At the other end is a grinning negro. He holds up his hands. The policeman approaches him and foolishly lowers his gun to get the handcuffs. Swift as a startled lizard, Hernandez

draws his revolver and another officer of the law has paid the price of fumbling a sure capture.

We next hear of Hernandez leading a gang of desperadoes ; sometimes on the Guatemalan side, sometimes on the Mexican side, sometimes in British territory. They camp here ; they camp there ; they move quickly. What's to be done ? His Excellency calls out the mounted volunteers. The Major Commanding invites me to go with them. It seems amusing and a little exciting. Armed like the others, I ride with them for a few days. Hernandez hears of our coming, and in an hour or two is over the frontier. We camp for a week in El Cayo, then return, feeling, and doubtless looking, a little ridiculous. On our return, the fugitive is solemnly outlawed with bell, book, and candle. Then the Authorities bethink them of Mercedes. A message comes to her that Hernandez will meet her at any one of three spots. Let her send a message through the usual channel. Poor Mercedes. The bait catches. She slinks away to the appointed place. Hernandez, all aglow, comes out of hiding. Three rifle shots ring out defiant through the glade. Hernandez lies dead. Mercedes shrieks and falls upon him, crying piteously. Three constables seize her roughly and push her aside. They dig a big hole and throw the dead man into it. On the way back, one of the constables tells Mercedes that he would like to have her as his woman. She spits at him.

Heigho ! For the last two hours I have lived all this over again. The story arose out of my little dissertation on law. I think, my dear boy, that,

had you gone to the Bar, I should have urged the Chancery side. The little history of Eleuterio Hernandez perhaps tells you why.

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

P.S.—Of course, if we cannot rely upon the military, we must conciliate and cajole the labourers.

A. F.

III: THE INNER LIGHT

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Since you reject law and teaching, I am curious to know whether you have thought of journalism. A young man with £700 a year has an excellent chance to achieve a striking career in journalism. You could mount high. But there is a proviso or two. You must have something to say; or, alternatively, you must have considerable literary adaptability to write what somebody else thinks. But you did not go to Cambridge to learn how to be an echo. Therefore, having regard to the dignity of your own soul, I presume that you will leave journalism severely alone unless you have a sense of some essence, some leavening within you, that will ultimately call for utterance. To adopt a phrase much used by your Quaker ancestors, you must 'feel drawn.' Your father lived and died a Quaker; I was 'disowned.' But I think the Quakers are in the right of it when they lay such stress, both in theory and practice, upon 'the inner light.' This 'inner light' is not conscience; it is a totally different quality. Conscience always seems to me to be a negative thing; it makes you feel uneasy when you have done wrong; but it is a poor guide. Then you would rejoice to be assured that something you are about to do is right. It is as though you stubbed your toe against a stone while walking in the dark. The 'inner light' would not only have lit your way, so that your person was safe; you would not have started on your journey unless certain that it was God's will. Thus, you may

reason yourself into a course of action, your conscience being perfectly quiescent, yet unless this Divine wire within you incandesces in response to your reason, then, to adopt another Quaker phrase, 'better wait further light.' It is said that there is a Providence that protects little children and drunken men. I do not pretend to explain it, being of the earth earthy, but it is undoubted that the Quaker habit (not necessarily confined to Quakers) of acting only in accordance with this 'inner light' goes far to explain that seeming paradox, 'the practical mystic.' The most striking example of this type, in the last century, was Abraham Lincoln. Oddly enough (when we think of the great war in which he was the chief protagonist) he, like us, came of Quaker stock. My point is that you must not merely reason yourself into journalism; you must feel that inner glow. If you do, depend upon it, you will not stub your toe. You will walk with assurance and safety, guided perchance (who knows?) by that same Providence that protects little children with an impalpable shield.

Why do I lay so much emphasis upon this 'inner light,' this subjective assurance, in regard to journalism, when I did not even mention it in respect of law and teaching? I will tell you. Because extremes are inherent in the theory and practice of journalism. It is a calling either sacred or of diabolical wickedness. And it entirely depends upon the practitioner. Why sacred? Because you do not deal merely with ideas in the abstract, but with living issues, out of which proceed conduct and action. If you sit on a jury, you are put on your

oath "to well and truly try [why do lawyers always split their infinitives?] the issues between our Sovereign Lord the King," etc., or whatever is the jargon. How many journalists are there who, if put upon oath, would write what they do? I reject with scorn the usual defence that a journalist is in the position of a barrister, paid to present a certain point of view. It is an utterly false analogy. It breaks down at the first touch. A barrister is an officer of the Court and his primary duty is to assist the Court. If the judge asks him for the precise law on the point being dealt with, he must tell the judge, regardless of his client's interest. Further, he must not implicitly or explicitly mislead the Court. Further, the judge is presumed to be a more experienced lawyer than the barrister. None of these conditions holds good in respect of a paid journalistic advocate. If he cannot make a better defence than that, let him be packed off incontinent "to his Master, the Father of All Lies." Tell me, then, is it not diabolically wicked to write what you do not believe, when you know that you may influence men's minds and actions? It is a dreadful thing unconsciously to mislead; to do it consciously, *and for pay* . . . I would prefer the company of Judas Iscariot.

In the religious sense of the word the journalist must have a 'vocation.' And the Institute of Journalists (if that is the representative body) should, like the Church, prepare its calendar of saints. I do not know much about journalists, but there are one or two names I should like to see in that calendar. First among them Frederick

Greenwood. I think, also, Hutton of *The Spectator*. They probably never wrote anything that appealed to me—sinner that I am—but I would go bail that Greenwood never wrote a line he did not sincerely believe and very few lines perfunctorily. If you were going into journalism (£700 a year assured), I would advise you to model your work on Greenwood's. Above all, you must know when to remain silent. If you cannot write with certainty, then do not write at all, or frankly admit your doubts and let your readers feel and know that your conclusions are tentative. The usual journalistic pose of omniscience sickens sensible men. I live in hopes that, some day, some writer will leave a blank column with the announcement: "Waiting for light." I suppose, however, the proprietor must be considered. Did you ever hear of the leader-writer who came into the office with nothing ready and the comps. waiting? He was drunk. His editor addressed him in pointed language. "All right, old cock," he hiccupped, "hand me the shears." Taking the current issue of *The Times*, he cut out the leading article, headed it: "What Does *The Times* Mean By This?" and, hey presto! his space was filled, truth was honoured and curiosity piqued.

I can see you smiling as you smoke a foul pipe. (Why do you let your pipes get so rank? Give them a good scrape and leave them in whisky overnight.) I can almost hear you saying: "By Jove! the Old Boy is pitching it very high." To be sure I am. If I discuss the Church of England with an Anglican, I treat him as though he were the Archbishop of Canterbury, the veritable head

of the Church, bound, in conscience and not by ecclesiastical policy, to hand on the faith unimpaired, unfractured by a comma. Do not tell me that there are thousands of clergymen, who live harmless and fairly useful lives, to whom the finer points of the creed are remote, just as there are thousands of decently minded journalists who do nothing in particular, certainly nothing that offends their conscience. I know all about these journeymen. I wish them well. But it is those who are responsible for the principles and tendencies of journalism with whom one must discuss the fundamental things. As a mere outsider, a simple-minded planter, I to-day look at the higher reaches of journalism, and I affirm that, in spirit and faith, in the essentials of truth-telling, it has never sunk so low. Its infidelities are obscured in its mechanical efficiency. Not by design but by Providence do its thousand falsehoods nullify each other.

I ascribe this spiritual decadence to two main causes: the invasion of the sanctuary by commercial interests and the debasing theory of the paid advocate.

Let me again remind you of your Quaker ancestry. Your forefathers would have sacrificed anything to preserve their belief that a paid ministry and the free utterance of truth were incompatible. If any man or woman was moved by the Spirit of God to utter some truth, some hope, some doubt, some prayer, then let him do it. Nay, more; he must do it. Imagine their horror at the modern journalistic conception that this should be done at so much per speech, so much per prayer! "A counsel of

perfection," you may say. Not a bit of it. We must, of course, consider the writing habit in relation to life.

In many parts of Europe, notably in Italy and Austria, in a little cubby-hole, generally near some cathedral or church, you will find a discreet old man who, for a small consideration, writes letters for illiterates. Young men and women, through this medium, send impassioned missives to their lovers; older men and women communicate on more material topics. The same thing is found in Central America. Some time ago, a negro in Puerto Cortez asked me to give him a job on the estate. I told him to go there and work would be found for him. A week or two later, I received the following letter, written in a very clerkly hand:

"SIR,

"I beg to advise you that I shall reach your estate next Thursday, on board the schooner *Corozal* (Captain Gardner, 25 tons).

"I trust it will be convenient for you to receive me at your pier.

"I am, sir, your obedient servant,

"ALOYSIUS FERGUSON."

A few weeks later he asked me to write a letter for him to his wife. He insisted on beginning: "Beloved and honest spouse." Nowadays we write our own love letters, at least I always do. If I can assist you at any time, pray command me.

Very good; we do our own writing. But is it to be confined only to affairs of the heart or the

body? Why not the mind and the soul? In other days every gentleman was expected to be proficient with sword, rapier, or pistol. I think that now he ought to be equally proficient with his pen. Some of the best writers of recent years have been plain business-men: Bagehot, Clodd, Graham, Hodgkin, and several others. When the habit of serious writing spreads, depend upon it, the paid advocate's day will be over. We shall, of course, have professional journalists. To edit and sub-edit a paper requires experience, knowledge, and skill. Even more important, *flair*. If journalism is to recover its good name, the element of sincerity must be re-introduced. And the most sincere writing, in the region of ideas particularly, must be done by men who write because they must, because they are truly moved by the Spirit. Most assuredly *not* because they are paid for it.

It is evident, too, that journalists must learn to respect themselves and their profession. I notice that any untrained scribbler calls himself a journalist. Just as many women before the magistrate used to describe themselves as actresses, so to-day it is not unusual for any adventurer or failure to claim journalism as his profession. Did I ever speak to you of Thomas Smithson? Probably not. Indeed, I haven't thought of him for years. He came to me with a letter of introduction from Jack Hurley.

“DEAR TONY [it read],

“The bearer of this letter, Mr Thomas Smithson, has been until recently the Minister of the Unitarian Church which I am wrongly supposed to

attend. I would go with pleasure, but the morning meeting clashes with my golf and the evening meeting with dinner. When Father died I continued his subscription. I wish now I hadn't. From what I can gather from Adeline, Smithson seems to have been preaching the most subversive rot. Anyhow, all the decent members of the fraternity or congregation, or whatever they call themselves, got up on their hind legs and kicked up Pandemonium. The working-class members, most of whom are employed at our works, rather liked it. Personally, I didn't care a brass farthing. Adeline said that it was only my subscription that kept the show going. It didn't seem quite cricket to put the poor devil on his beam ends, so I called him up the other day and suggested that probably a year's rest and earnest thought would restore his jangled nerves. Luckily he jumped at it. Adeline and her prig of a husband are quite perky about it and are busy looking round for some ass with a degree—I think they are rather keen on a B.D. Smithson insists on going to London, where he will be probably gobbled up by you clever blighters. Give him a leg-up.

“Yours, in the service of God,

“JACK.”

As I read this ingenuous letter, Mr Thomas Smithson sat awkwardly on the corner of a chair. I told him that anything I could do for a man so deeply respected, I might also say revered, by my friend Mr Hurley would most readily be done. Then he told me how that he had risen from the lowly position of an insurance collector; that always

his heart had bled for the people ; that the wealthy members of his congregation were deeply unsympathetic, except Mr Hurley, to whom he always went for support ; that finally his conscience had led him to seek a wider sphere of labour in London. I asked him what he proposed to do. " Why, sir," said he, " I wield a ready and facile pen." My sense of humour was too much for me. Putting on a look of consternation, I said : " Don't ! " He sprang up, his eyes flashed through his spectacles, his moustache and beard stiffened like porcupine quills. " I see, sir, that you also are cynical and worldly-minded." Smoothing him down (I had clearly treated a guest discourteously) I gave him tea, took his address, and promised to write to him. Just then, as luck had it, a semi-sinecure job turned up and Smithson got it. He writes in obscure magazines, sometimes getting 2s. 6d. or 5s. He has a new baby with distressing frequency, and I am godfather to his eldest son. On his letter-head you will read : " Thomas Smithson, Author and Journalist."

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

IV : PLAYING THE GAME

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I was very glad to receive your letter in which you question an observation of mine upon the teaching profession. "Surely," you exclaim, "a man may be a gentleman whatever his occupation." And I agree. What I wrote, or intended to write, was that, pedagogy being asleep or dead, mere teaching was not an occupation for a gentleman. That, you will observe, does not preclude a teacher from being a gentleman. To assert it would be foolish, because we know that many teachers are gentlemen. But are you quite sure that every gentleman can resist the demoralizing influences of an occupation from which the spirit has fled? You may set out to be an honest teacher, but how if the teaching currency be debased? No gentleman, I take it, would knowingly deal in base coin, although unknowingly he may do it without offence to his conscience. I have observed that this is really the case with gentlemen who teach. They are imbued with the idealism and the great spiritual possibilities of their calling. They fail to see that society has devitalized their ideals and rendered futile their efforts. But if you enter the profession knowing these facts, then you cease to be a gentleman, because you have joined in an ungentlemanly conspiracy with your eyes open. I think that here is the key to much that puzzles us in the character and conduct of individuals. They are gentlemen because of their credulity. They do things because it is 'the custom of the trade,' as the lawyers put it,

quite blind to the inherent dishonesty or caddishness of the custom. For my part, I like a man to know what he is about.

In our own more civilized community we knowingly play with five aces. Thus, in social affairs, we adopt a habit of rigid fairness; we condemn unfairness as 'not cricket.' But in the far more serious business of wealth-production, the basis of social life, we are absolved from ungentlemanly conduct by our defence that 'business is business.' How different, too, are the ethics of the counting-house or factory from the amenities of our social relations! In good schools sneaking is practically unknown. If it exist, the offender is very properly kicked. I have seen boys go from school into business and in a few months not only sneak but be rewarded for sneaking by an employer who was himself a public school boy. "Quite right, Smith; I am glad to see that you have the interests of the business at heart. Let me see, how much are you getting? Ah! Well, times are hard, but I think we could squeeze out another pound a month." This man, the head of a "house famous for its fair dealing," as the trade journals assert, is still furious at the memory of a Varsity match when the Cambridge bowler sent down wides to prevent the follow-on, while the Oxford batsman put down his wicket to secure it. "Not cricket, sir, damn it all, not cricket!" you can hear him say should the incident crop up.

You may kick your old uncle if you catch him moralizing on inconsistencies like these. Alas! I am too old for highfalutin. Besides, I have done worse things myself. Nor is there any moral that

I know of. There is a general conclusion to which most sane men would agree ; that, until we understand that we do not live to chisel each other, but rather to co-operate frankly and honestly in making life easy, charming, and fruitful, you have no alternative but to enter the game and play it in its full rigour. You cannot succeed if, giving full meaning and significance to the word, you play it as gentlemen. To be a gentleman in serious business spells failure, and I do not want you to be a failure. Your father would have sunk into the deeps rather than do an ungentlemanly thing. A veil was mercifully spread over his eyes. He thought life was a pretty decent affair, only requiring a trifling reform here and there. Nothing, you understand, to disturb the current of business ; just reform gradually applied, like arnica on bumps. But, if you ask any candid man of the world, he will tell you that our whole social and economic fabric is built upon the insecure foundation of the working man's ignorance or compliance.

I wonder whether, in your approved Varsity manner, you will remind me that I have not yet defined a gentleman. To the deuce with your definitions ! Send no mincing professor of logic to me to admonish me that I "must first define my terms." If he comes I will drown or poison him. How can you define the indefinable ? Define for me, if you please, the moral squint that denotes a cad ; define, if you can, the spiritual apperceptions that make a gentleman—apperceptions, mark you, that outrank age and caste, that are unrelated to good taste, to fastidiousness, to those solemn conventions upon which we set such store.

In my Socialist days, when I was young and care-free, I tramped all over the country lecturing. Heaven forgive me ! Shallow calling to shallows. Still, I do not regret it. *Tout au contraire !* I am rather proud of it. To stand up on a chair, or a box, in the market-place and speak out what you do veritably believe is good for the soul. It all went into my making. With that stodgy back-number, Southey, I say without blushing :

Do I regret the past ?
Would I live o'er again
The morning hours of life ?
Nay, William, nay, not so !
Praise be to God who made me what I am,
Other I would not be.

Well, in the course of my peregrinations, I came to Darlington. I was met by a little deputation of young men, each with a new heaven and earth in his waistcoat pocket. Outside the station a private carriage waited. I was shown in and my companions followed. "Hello !" said I, "why this swagger ?" "Owd Jack did it," said one of them. "Who the deuce is he ?" I asked. "Just Owd Jack," said they. "Am I his guest ?" "Aye." "What's his name ?" "Jack Harden." "A local manufacturer ?" "Nay." "Hang it all, what is he ?" "A commission agent," said one of them, just as though Jack Harden might be a grocer or any other tradesman. I pledge my word I did not know what a commission agent was. I thought that probably he sold goods on commission. They must be jolly good commissions, I thought to myself. We soon arrived at an ornate house, complete, and even

replete, with all the modern conveniences. A short, stout man, black-eyed, hawk-nosed, lips covered by a black, silky moustache over an imperial tuft, welcomed me. "Coom in, lad; glad to see thee; how art tha?" He plumped me down in a comfortable chair and called for drinks. "Happen tha'l't be hoongry?" I said I was. "Reet, owd lad, the victuals are ready." We passed into the dining-room, furnished in approved dark oak, and sat down to a dinner as substantial as the furniture. "Have a pint of fizz, lad." "And you?" I asked. "Nay, nay, a flim-flam gargle; stout for me." He drank two quarts. He took off his coat; he unbuttoned his waistcoat, disclosing in the process a most unsightly protuberance. He gobbled his food; his drink gurgled in his throat. He did every conceivable thing at the table repellent to my gentlemanly instincts. "By the way," said I, "they tell me you are a commission agent. What's your line of goods?" For a moment he looked hard at me, wondering if I was pulling his leg. Then he broke into loud laughter. "Why, lad, doesn't tha' knäw that I'm a betting man?" "Really!" said I, "how very interesting," and tried to look like a Fabian researcher.

You remember, do you not, that our distant cousins, the Ferriers, live in Darlington? On the Sunday afternoon, leaving Harden snoring on a big sofa after a gargantuan meal, I made my way to Aunt Mary's. I found her giving tea to a lot of people. "Why, Tony, where did you spring from?" she exclaimed. "A little visit," I murmured. "Where are you staying?" she asked. It suddenly

flashed upon me that I was ashamed to tell her that my host was a bookie. "At the hotel," I answered. "Which?" she asked. I knew no hotel in the place. "Do you know, Aunt Mary, I don't remember its name. It's the big brick affair with stone facings." "That would be the 'Castle,' my dear." "I believe you're right," said I, brightening. "Well, you'll stay to dinner." "Sorry, can't; 'nother engagement; just had to look you up." Dick Ferrier came down to the hall to see me off. "May see you at the 'Castle' to-night," said he, "little private party." "Fact is, Dick, I'm a gay deceiver. I'm down here to give a Socialist lecture and I'm staying with John Harden. Couldn't tell that to Aunt Mary, y'know." "By Jove! You don't say so! I owe the beggar three hundred of the brightest and best. Can't pay in a hundred years. Wish you'd put in a word for me." "Are you serious?" "Good God, yes!" "Why not ask Uncle Richard for it?" "Don't be a silly ass; he'd turn me out of the business." "I'm sorry, Dick, but I never met Harden until last night and obviously I'm unable to help you."

That night Harden took the chair for my lecture. I remember it very well, although two or three years before you were born. "Ah'm gläd to täke t' chair for oor lect'rer. Ah'm jüst t' säme now as ah was when a barber, shäving you chaps at three hä'pence a time. Ah've got a bit o' brass in t' bank, but that doän't chänge me. Ah'm heart and soul in t' labour movement, because t' capitalists and ländloords doän't gie a square deal. Ah know 'em! Soom on 'em are decent as you or me; soom on 'em . . .! They calls themselves gentlemen. Gentlemen! They

meets me in t' street and doän't know me ; but they coom vera secret to m' little office and says : ' Jack, owd lad, I canna pay thee to-day ; thou must gie me more time.' They says they pays their debts o' honour. Most on 'em pays when they dam well got to. Nay, my lads, they doän't gie anybody a square deal. If we ha' spunk, why we're gude as them ; if we ha'nt spunk, why, what's t' gude o' talk ? " Then I delivered an ingenuous and harmless lecture on " Socialism and the Christian Ethic."

Next morning, at breakfast, Harden asked me where I had gone to on the previous afternoon. " Mrs Ferrier," I said ; " she's a relation of mine." " Happen she's t' mother o' young Dicky Ferrier ? " " Yes ; a bright boy and might do something in the world if he doesn't get in with the wrong crowd." " Aye," he mused, " Aye. Cooms o' gude stock. A blood relation o' thine ? " " Yes." Then I hurried off to the train.

A week later came a letter from Master Dick, with too many flourishes to my liking.

" DEAR TONY,

" A thousand thanks ! Old Jack met me y'day and said that if I would cut out gambling and do something ' kind and canny ' he would wipe out the £300. Fancy that ! But I suppose you had a lot to do with it.

" However, gambling is a rotten game and I agreed. ' Shake hands on it, lad,' said he. So we solemnly shook.

" Your aff. coz.,

" R. STANLEY FERRIER."

After that, my boy, if you still insist upon the definition of a gentleman, let's drop the subject !

I enclose you a tradesman's bill which I inadvertently opened. Forgive me. I could not, however, fail to notice that last year you spent over £17 on underwear. Much too much ! £5 covers me easily. Do you watch your clothing and see that there is no leakage ? Without taking too much thought for the morrow, there is nothing derogatory in keeping a sort of inventory. And don't be ashamed to have your underclothing mended and your socks darned. Not to do so is the mark of the *nouveaux riches* ; to do so is one of the minor marks of a gentleman.

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

V : MEDICINE

DEAR GEORGE,

With £700 a year you could cut some figure in the new despotism which we call 'medicine' in our temperate moments. It would be said of you that you had 'private means' ('private' is delightful) and followed your profession for the love of it. You could practise in some poverty-stricken area, and, in ten years, find yourself with an impregnable seat in Parliament. A shilling practice is very remunerative. You could settle in the most exclusive suburb of some manufacturing town and marry a millionaire's daughter. Better still, you could avoid the life of a general practitioner and devote yourself to the study of the laboratory. You could then invent some antitoxin and get it placed on the market by some drug-making concern on half-shares. You would, of course, write or read a paper upon the subject and veil the actual concoction in a cloud of verbal hugger-mugger. You must do this to escape any possible proceedings against you for unprofessional conduct. 'Infamous' is, I think, the technical term. Your medical brethren would then stand solid behind you and you could hold up the British Army until every rank and file had been inoculated. Later on you could become a consultant and earn £10,000 a year. Or you could take to surgery, if your fingers are strong and pliable. Then you would invent some disease somewhere which is only curable by the knife. If you hypnotize the profession, cases will be sent to you, and for every operation you can get

anything up to £100. Good business, my boy, good business !

There are certain resemblances between the medicine-men and the priests. Both do quite a lot of good in their various ways. A priest, for example, makes an excellent executor (don't be afraid ! No priest for me !) and often advises wisely as to the disposition of an estate. If occasionally he does a stroke of business for Mother Church, or some charity in which he is interested, well, why not ? We are all of us human. He composes family quarrels and even village feuds. As often as not he is the only educated man in the neighbourhood, and that makes for social sanity. In Ireland he is a deft hand at match-making. "Do ye see that wumman there ?" an Irish farmer said to me. "She came within £10 of being me woife. At the last moment Father Flanagan got Shamus Flynn to spring another £10 for Bridget, so I closed wid him and split the difference wid his riverence." I do not doubt that the administration of the 'last offices' (whatever they are—I haven't the least notion) is grateful and comforting to the dying. A priest with a gift for statesmanship can often prove of more than passing value—Father Findlay, for example, of the Irish Technical and Education Board. In like manner doctors are socially useful. Trained in extreme cleanliness, they often compel their own neighbourhood to cleanly habits. This leads to communal sanitation and the decrease of disease. This decrease they then ascribe to inoculation. It's really rather funny. It is the 'tone' of medicine to act as a counterpoise to the Church.

"See what we do by faith," says the Church. "See what we do by science," retorts Medicine. Any controversy of that kind also makes for social sanity.

But the trouble with the doctor, as with the priest, is that, as often as not, he really believes in his own nostrums. It sounds incredible; it is true. Take vaccination, for example. Common sense has long since knocked the bottom out of it. Since Jenner (or whoever it was) experimented with his filthy cow-pox and proclaimed it a sure prophylactic against small-pox the medical profession has been driven back from one line of defence to another. I question if there are now a thousand sane men in the country, outside the profession, who believe in it. Having quite obviously rid ourselves of small-pox by ordinary sanitation, the medicine-men come back smiling with half a dozen other filthy messes which they would pump into our blood. This new business of inoculation is an attempt by the doctors to recover their old monopoly of the art of tattooing. I do not doubt that their native *confrères* in Siam, Malay, Timbuctoo, Ashanti, and Patagonia are lending their moral and financial support. We must remember that in these countries tattooing has always been regarded as a prophylactic. In Europe the doctors tattoo against some devil which they affirm is in the body; the coloured fraternity affirm that these devils reside in the air and are frightened off by properly conceived tattoo marks. There seems to be about as much evidence on one side as the other.

We may reasonably hope that the present in-

oculation craze that is sweeping over medicine like measles will soon exhaust itself. And we must remember that the vast majority of doctors are very lightly affected by it. They go about their business of curing diseases, the cures being acquired by safe empirical methods. I like to think that they rely less and less on drugs and more and more on common sense. The side that has yielded most to common sense is preventive medicine. There is surely a splendid and useful work to be done in that direction. To guide the community into healthy and cleanly habits is surely work worth doing. To teach a young mother how to nurture her child ; to see to it that the eyes, nostrils, teeth, bodies, and limbs of school-children are kept fit ; to ensure ample leisure in good surroundings for ' young persons ' (as the law designates them) ; to insist upon sound sanitary arrangements in factories and workshops ; to make it criminal to let unhealthy dwellings ; to sweep away whole areas that are palpably insanitary—and damn the cost. It is in these directions that medicine can best work out its humane mission. Nor can it be denied that our public medical officers are building up an enviable record. They are handicapped by propertied interests ; they are tripped and tricked by auctioneers, house agents, rent-collectors, and even by the frightened and unhappy denizens of the disease-stricken areas. But they steadily pursue their way and reduce the death-rate, even if they do not intensify our vitality.

It is, however, in preventive medicine that we find the germ—a developed germ, I fear—of the new

despotism. The medical mandarins say that if they are to prevent disease they must be given despotic powers. You see it most distinctly in the Panama zone. The doctor rules there with a heavy hand. He has, of course, considerable sanction, because of the danger of tropical fevers. He has to his credit the medical administration that stamped out yellow fever and reduced malaria to a minimum. But he does not stop there ; he accumulates more power from year to year. He has frightened the Government into helpless acquiescence. I happened to be taking tea last year at Culebra with the wife of an important official. She was in some distress. The previous day one of the medical force paid her a social visit. While he was there her little girl sneezed. "Good gracious ! Let me see her," said the doctor. "Ah ! a slight snuffle ; might be scarlet fever. She must go to the isolation hospital. I will hurry off and order an ambulance." "But, doctor," cried the distracted mother, "I know it's only a slight cold." "Possibly you're right, Mrs Despard, but we can't take risks." "Well, wait till to-morrow." "No ; we never wait." "Let me go with her ; she's all I have," pleaded the mother. "Sorry ; no. Mothers are a nuisance up there." The little girl was taken away and one more 'case' added to the records to prove how vigilant are the zone doctors. Never, even in the days of ancient Egypt, did priest or rulers exercise such unrestrained dominion. Things are not so bad as that in England just yet. But not even with the medical fraternity must we relax the salutary rule that experts are good servants but bad and dangerous masters.

If I am a little incredulous about the omniscience of doctors it by no means follows that I disbelieve entirely in them. We must acknowledge that they have at their command a great store of accumulated knowledge. But I prefer, in this instance, the empirical to the rational. When they argue from the rational, experimenting upon our bodies from pure theory, I fear for my life. But when they tell me that, in practice, a disease treated in such and such a way has yielded good results, then I am willing to take my chances. Beyond that, no, thank you ! A few miles north of the estate, old Fernando Migail has a nice little lot of grape-fruit trees. He is a cantankerous old curmudgeon, as self-opinionated as he is stupid. His wife hates him, while his two sons want him out of the way. He will not pack his fruit, as the merchants want it, in grades. "No," he grunts ; "there's the stuff, take it or leave it." And so he throws away good money. A little while ago he trod on a 'Tommy Gough' snake, one of our very worst. In a trice the creature had its fangs in old Fernando's thigh. He whipped out his jack-knife and cut away for dear life. No luck ! The poison began its deadly work. He dragged his way home. The family, inwardly not sorry, at least did their duty. Post-haste they send for the medical officer. For three long hours does old Fernando grunt and groan and swear volubly in English and Spanish. The medical officer comes and examines him. "We may save your life if we amputate," he declares. "What ! Take off my leg ! No ; death first." "It's the only way," says the medical officer. "All right ! Don't bother

me ; I'll die in peace. What happens, happens." The medical officer goes out to meet the wife. " His number's up ! " says he. " Well, doctor," says she, " would you kindly order a coffin from the carpenter when you get back ? " " Certainly," says he, " but we must get his proper size." " I have it," says she, all ready with the figures, on a dirty little piece of paper. The medical officer puts it in his pocket and gallops off. He arrives home and gives the order to the carpenter. " Hurry up ! They'll want it in the morning."

Meantime old Fanny, the bush doctor, waits outside Fernando's house. She knows the family want him to die, or why should they send for the white doctor ? So she slips in to Fernando when nobody is looking. " Bad, bad, bad," says Fanny in an even voice. " Get busy, you damned old witch," says Fernando. " Ten dollars," says Fanny smoothly, with leering eye. " Over there in the desk, you dirty thief." Fanny tiptoes over and gets the money. Then she brings out her herbs and her decoctions and doses old Fernando. All night does Fanny apply her remedies that are not found in the British Pharmacopœia. Outside, Fernando's wife dozes in a chair, dreaming of peace and quiet. In another room the two sons sit and think of big profits made out of their properly graded fruit. Dawn quickly passes into bright sunshine. The family silently move into the room to perform the last services to the dead. Old Fernando lies on his bed and reads their thoughts. He orders them out.

Curiosity takes the doctor out on the morning of

the third day. He finds old Fernando still in bed, but "doing nicely, thank you, Doc." "Let's see it," says the medical officer. So he examines it. "Yes; it's just as I said. Gangrene has set in. Shall I operate at once?" "Go to blazes!" shouts old Fernando.

In due course he recovers, to the consternation of his happy family and the amusement of the rest of us. The carpenter leaves the coffin at the doctor's door. The doctor wants to sell a coffin. Two or three are at Death's door; but they make their relatives promise not to buy the coffin made for old Fernando, for if they are put in it they will go to hell without doubt.

A few days later I told this story to the principal medical officer. "Nothing surprises me," he says. "When I was medical officer at Corozal a mahogany teamsman had his leg crushed by a big log that rolled back on him. I rode out to him. Leg was just mush—just mush! I said: 'Bill, it's got to come off.' 'No,' said he; 'take my leg and you take my living.' He wouldn't budge. So I fixed him up as comfortably as possible, put his leg in splints and hung its support from a branch, covered him with a fly-net, and generally did all I could for him. In three months he was walking about.

"Yes," said he; "I remember that case for another reason. Just then we were having trouble with the Indians. One of them crawled up and potted at me at close range while I was bending over my patient. The bullet nicked my ear. Close call! I did not think about it, being absorbed, until riding home. Then the flies got at the wound

and gave me gip." "Did you amputate the ear?" I asked. "Don't be a damned fool," said the principal medical officer; "the drinks are on you."

There! I grow reminiscent. Old age!

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

VI: THE SERVICE OF THE STATE

MY DEAR GEORGE,

You tell me that not one of the liberal professions appeals to you, but that some congenial and useful work might be found in the Civil Service. I would not discourage you. I am not sure if the future does not contain many rich gifts for those who directly enter the service of the State. But a different type of civil servant will be demanded, notably men who are technically proficient in some branch of wealth production. You remark that just now the responsibility of the Civil Service must be almost too heavy to be borne, and finally add that you cannot understand my silence on the war.

I have been silent because I knew not what to write. *Inter arma silent scriptores*. In a business such as this, so stupendous, creating, in a few short months, a new epoch, it is better to be mute unless one has the *mot juste*. In vain have the pamphleteers hammered at my brain—the Oxford group, Shaw, Wells, and the rest. They leave me cold and unresponsive. Cold, because I cannot see any reason for their intervention; unresponsive because they throw no light upon the realities. Wells sees in the war endless opportunities for nagging. He has spent twenty years writing fiction, believing it to be the truth; Shaw has spent thirty years writing what he believed to be the truth, when all the time it was fiction far more diverting than Wells's febrile fascination for the sexual. Each has a public numbering a thousand or two; each believes that he influences men's actions. If it were true,

then they would be a couple of mischief-makers ; as it is, they are both nuisances, mosquitoes buzzing in a bed-net. The Oxford group would have us believe that we entered the war with humanitarian motives to kill the monster of militarism. If I am thrown into a swift current, I am a fool to shout that I went in to fight the current. My business is to get out with the least damage to myself and without mock heroics. And when I am back on dry ground, the only possible advantage that can accrue is some small improvement in my swimming. Moreover, if four or five other fellows are thrown in with me, and two of them are drowned, I am no richer for their loss. There is a change, however. "One cannot step twice into the same river," said Heraclitus. Truly, "all things flow."

In these troubled months my mind has constantly reverted to the last great epoch—the French Revolution. It is curious that the only account of that period that sticks in my mind is Carlyle's. His 'facts' are long since out of date ; factors have been disclosed that were unknown to him. Yet his picture remains the most consistent and his story the most credible. I have been wondering whether this is not due to his method. When your letter came I pondered what Carlyle would have written. In an idle moment I began an exercise in the Carlylian method. Perhaps it may interest you :

☞ "All through the days and nights of July the British Foreign Secretary has premonitions : is conscious of pending events pregnant with fate and fraught with indefinable menace. He passes to his

seat in Parliament, grave, preoccupied. He sits listening to the clatter of irresponsible Tapers, of Tadpoles, swelling with self-importance like the fabled frog. He listens uncomprehending, for his thoughts wander to the Ballplatz in Vienna, to Belgrade, where in that square, flat-roofed house, sit Pashitch and Jonanovitch in anxious consultation. The Serajevo bullet has penetrated to the heart of Europe. Pashitch measures the chances of Russian support ; he knows that neither Russia nor France wants war ; he knows that the Dual Monarchy would crush Serbia and now has a diplomatic pretext. The British Foreign Secretary, seated in isolation, tries to pierce the thoughts, the intentions of these actors in this the first act of Europe's terrible drama. The moods of the House, evanescent, shadows of clouds upon the waters, barely touch him. No smile relieves the stern, set face, its skin drawn tightly over aquiline nose and square jaw. His weary eyes scan closely the human elements around and about him. He knows that the wolves are gathering, hungry, growling. Is this an assembly of sheep? In a few short weeks will the wolves' fangs be at their throats? The words of the Viennese *Militärische Rundschau*, read by ambitious officers, who only in war win laurels, ferment in his brain : ' If we do not decide for war, the war we shall have to make in two or three years at the latest will be begun in circumstances much less propitious. Now the initiative belongs to us. . . . Since some day we shall have to accept the struggle let us provoke it at once.' Provoke ! Ominous initiative ! The military men have been recently impressing

him with the capital importance of initiative. By delay, by striving for peace to the very end, he knowingly yields this advantage to the enemy. So be it ! There are moral considerations not to be lightly disregarded—nay, that must, whatever the hazard, be obeyed at the peril of his soul and the treasured good faith of the people that have confided to him the grim issues, and, trusting him, pursue their avocations, their ambitions, pleasures, recreations. The Powers and Principalities know it ; they know that their secrets must be all revealed when their archives are opened to the Grand Inquest of Mankind. But can he disregard the words of the caustic and epigrammatic Dumaine, Ambassador of the Republic to the Court of the Dual Monarchy ? That very day the courtly Cambon had privately shown him Dumaine's last dispatch : ' For this newspaper, appeasement and security can only be achieved by a war to the knife against pan-Serbianism, and it is in the name of humanity that it demands the extermination of the accursed Serbian race.'

" Barely a lingering doubt remains in the inner sanctuary of his mind : the wolves are gathering even before the snow falls. Behind the editors of these semi-official journals stands the thin, strained figure of Count Berchtold ; behind that dyspeptic diplomatist stand the German War Lord, his impetuous heir-apparent, the German Chancellor, and the war-machine, waiting impatiently for the button to be touched. Not without reason had Cambon concluded his interview with the grave words, '*C'est la guerre*,' rising and moving away silently, with mincing

gait, over the thick carpet. Cambon must know. His brother Jules is French Ambassador at Berlin. The issue is to be Teuton against Slav. What matters it? One issue is as good as another. The wolves are hungry. They must taste blood.

“Sir Edward Grey leans back, hands in pocket, looking up at the glass roof through which comes the cunningly softened light. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, with slight limp, slides past, sits down near him, and is soon in animated conversation with the Chief Whip. He discusses every point, laughs, jokes, makes suggestions and calculations. ‘Perky, plucky, tricky,’ some one remarks of him on a back bench, half in admiration, half in contempt. The Prime Minister lumbers to his seat, wisps of silver white hair trailing over his collar. He carries with him an air of solidity, almost of serenity. The Foreign Secretary is dimly conscious that this must be a special night, probably Ireland. He is suddenly recalled from his reverie. Across the table stands the heavy-jowled Carson, reckless and overbearing, muttering and uttering scarcely veiled rebellion. His words hurtle round the House. Jibes and insults and challenging laughter are shot back at him, staccato, like the rattle of rifles, from the raucous throats of the Liberals and Nationalists. The Leader of the Opposition, acid, angular, old-maidish, is visibly embarrassed. His party, proudly declaring its fidelity to the flag, sits silent, nervous and apprehensive. Civil war! The Foreign Secretary’s lips curl contemptuously. The fools! This is the passion of a game not of life and death. Full soon they will hear the guns; their nearest

and dearest will be called. But it is not to Carson that Grey looks at this perilous time. Below the gangway, massive, sphinx-like, sits Redmond. The word will be with him. With Redmond, and not with those pale simulacra on the Labour benches, who, pretending to come from the Mountain, graze contentedly in the paddock.

“Dryasdust, nosing through the archives of the Quai d’Orsay, has hit upon some contemporary documents which we may declare to be significant of much. One of these documents is signed by Faramond, Naval Attaché at the French Embassy in Berlin. Our Faramond observes with clear eyes. From the calm waters of his diplomatic lagoon he looks out into the industrial jungle of the Fatherland and sees portents therein, to which he earnestly invites the attention of his official superiors. Let Faramond speak: ‘The German soldier is no longer what he was forty years ago—a simple religious man, ready to die at the order from his King—and William II cannot afford to allow a retreat to enter into his calculations. Taking into account the four million Socialist votes polled at the last election, and remembering that the franchise is only given at the age of twenty-five, one may be justified in thinking that the active army, composed of young people between the ages of twenty and twenty-five, must have in its ranks a considerable number of Socialists.’ Faramond, worthy man, strikes a new note in diplomatic correspondence. Another document is a memorandum for one Stephen Pichon, whom we have forgotten if we ever remembered, Minister for Foreign Affairs, on July 30, 1913:

‘Others consider war as necessary for economic reasons found in over-population and over-production, the need of markets and of outlets, or for social reasons such as that diversion abroad alone can prevent or delay the rising to power of the Democratic and Socialist masses.’ And there is much more to like effect, ending thus: ‘Moreover, doctrinaire manufacturers declare that the difficulties they have with their workers originated in France, the revolutionary home of ideas of emancipation—without France industry would be quiet. Finally, the gun and armour-plate manufacturers, the great merchants who clamour for greater markets, and the bankers who speculate on the golden age and the indemnity of war think that war would be good business.’ Mammon, whom we have met before, at divers times and places, is like to exert a determining voice at this desperate conjunction.

“We may be certain that our Foreign Secretary is well informed of the sentiments of the marketplace when the dice-box rattles in the hand of Von Jagow. The first throw is at St Petersburg, almost immediately to be re-christened Petrograd. The Austrian Ambassador hints that his Government may search on Serbian territory for the instigators of Serajevo. ‘Do not enter upon that path,’ replies Sazonof. On July 23 Austria presents her ultimatum to Serbia. It must be swallowed, body and bones, in forty-eight hours. On July 24 Sir Edward Grey is officially informed. He remarks to the Austrian Ambassador that never had a document of so formidable a character been addressed from one Government to another. Not dismayed, he

sets the Chancelleries to work to find a formula to appease Austria. The next week we witness processions of ambassadors at the Ballplatz and the Wilhelmstrasse. In vain! For there is no conceivable formula under heaven to which Germany will consent. Her army watches with ill-disguised dismay the passage of precious days while these men talk. End it! Let the sword decide. Austria mobilizes, Russia mobilizes, but that busybody of a British Minister still seeks the magic formula, searching for it as for the Holy Grail. *Donnerwetter!* We know why! He fears us. Let us march!

“But our Foreign Secretary is not afraid. Nor does the British nation tremble. Fear! We have dealt before with wolves and our dominion runs to the ends of the world. Look more closely at home, O fire-eating Junkerdom! For if Grey but speak the word; if he will but whisper in the ear of the gentle Lichnowsky that we will support our good friend France; that, if we take up our arms, we will never lay them down until Germany and its Junkers lie prostrate, be it in one year or ten—then, most valiant Kaiser, we know of a certainty that thy sword may rattle but will not leave its scabbard. But Grey is silent. ‘Go your courses, noble sirs, without regard to us. When we strike, we strike. But we do not threaten.’

“At this vital moment in the negotiations we may, with all our hearts, pity the predicament of the British Foreign Secretary. He can decide, aye or nay, if war shall devastate Europe. The Marquess di San Giuliano, Italy’s Foreign Minister, says to Monsieur Barrère, the French Ambassador, that ‘at

this moment Germany takes great account of her relations with London, and that, if there is one Power who can persuade Berlin to take pacific action, it is England.' Sazonof cables the same opinion to Benckendorff. Viviani implores Grey to pronounce the fateful decision. Grey remains silent. He cannot speak, if he would, for he must gain the consent of the Cabinet. Nor can the Cabinet speak until Parliament has been duly notified and votes the supplies. But we must not suppose that our Foreign Secretary, were he tongue-free and able to say what is in his mind, would even then have warned Germany that the weight of the British Empire would be thrown in the scales against her. Germany would have withdrawn and Europe would have heard nothing but of Britain's bullying diplomacy. Our Grey is not minded to draw down upon us Germany's rage and spleen without due compensation. No ; if diplomacy cannot speak its mind frankly and without *arrière pensée* because the War Lord for ever threatens, then let civilization abdicate and make way for the devil with his legions of darkness. Nor does our Foreign Secretary fail to make some calculations. He knows the power and recuperative faculties of France. Here on his desk are the figures of the French army and navy, no doubt more than a little coloured with Latin optimism. Here, too, are the Russian totals, passing belief. Never mind ; if but the half be true we stand on sure ground. The words of the Viennese editor re-echo in his brain : ' If not now then in two or three years.' Let us then face the fight never doubting. We struggle to the end to dissolve the

issues in pure reason. Mars, in unholy union with Mammon, was too strong.

“Ye Powers and Temporalities, Ye Immensities, Ye Clouds and Constellations, and Thou, O Mother Earth, eternally revolving in the sun’s gracious light, grant, we pray you, that this monstrous iniquity be not laid at our door. This arbitrament by blood, this worship of Thor, this dethronement of Reason, comes uninvited upon us ; we sought it not, for we were at our daily tasks ; our minds were far from it. But bear witness, also, we pray, that we go forward to our fate without fear and without flinching. We throw down the torch ; we seize the sword ; undismayed, we march into the future.”

I fear, perhaps, that Carlyle may have been misinformed in some respects !

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

VII: THE EXPERT

MY DEAR GEORGE,

You remind me that I advocated a guild for the teachers, but that when it comes to doctoring I solemnly warn you not to let the expert become our master. Then you clinch your argument: "If a guild be the right form of organization for the teachers, then it is equally applicable to medicine. But if we give the doctors complete control, what can prevent the experts from being our masters?"

A good debating point for the Union! I do not whisper my *touché*; I shout it. In this instance, however, you have not touched me. You have overlooked two definitions: of control and of master.

Now what is mastery? Ruskin called Carlyle his 'master'; Plato they called 'master'; Christ also. Clearly I did not mean that mystic emanation from spiritual integrity. These 'masters' did not achieve their rank by legislative recognition, like the French Academy or our own Order of Merit. Good God! The idea! They compelled by their unseen powers. "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me," said Christ. Observe that this is not technical mastery, even though they were supreme technicians. It involves a spiritual quality very rare and precious. What a far cry is this from the growing dominance of the medicine-men! I have more than once seen in their literature references to the psychological relations that must be established between doctor and patient. To that I do not object; it is probably more than half the cure.

But their mastery must not extend beyond that point.

A doctor comes to me to tell me that he has discovered a culture or germ (or whatever he calls it) that, if circulated through my blood, is a sure anti-toxin against typhoid. "That is very interesting," I reply. He goes on to say that he has another prophylactic against malaria. "That, too, is indeed interesting, because I spend half my time in a malarial country." "I can also inoculate you against diphtheria, meningitis, colds, coughs, kidney troubles, tuberculosis." "Good!" I answer; "Science is wonderful." "I will now proceed to inoculate you against all these diseases," he says, pulling a great variety of tubes and syringes and other appliances out of his bag. "Thanks, no," I reply; "it is very kind of you, but I have had typhoid, and the other complaints don't worry me. I am very old-fashioned, and live on the principle that if I eat well, sleep well, and scrupulously attend to the proper hygiene of my body I sha'n't do so badly." "Sir," he thunders back, "I see that you are a faddist, a fanatic. It is men like you who thwart the march of science. As you will not listen to reason, I will obtain Parliamentary powers to compel you to be inoculated, as many times, and against as many diseases, as I choose. Science has no patience with faddists."

The odd thing is that the medicos really believe it. Some time ago a prominent official in the Colonial Medical Service sat talking with me before a blazing fire at the Club. We both had colds. I think mine was worse than his, but probably he thought differently.

“I’m going to the laboratory,” he told me, “to get a proper antitoxin. You’d better come too.” “No, thanks,” I snuffled; “I’m off home.” Ten days later I met him again. He was busily engaged with a pocket-handkerchief that must originally have been a bed-sheet. “How’s your cold?” he snuffled. “Gone, ages ago,” I chirped. “Had a Turkish bath, slept warm, ate an enormous breakfast in bed next morning, stayed in all day, read a couple of books, kept out of draughts, quite fit the morning after. Sore nose, vaseline put that right. And you?” “Oh, I’m going along all right. Swallowed four million germs; had the right feverish reaction in forty-eight hours; and now the cure is running its normal course.”

Now, I do not mind if the vast mass of our people willingly submit to every kind of inoculation. If the doctors can persuade them, who am I that should object? But the moment my own person is compulsorily invaded, then I very emphatically protest. There are limits; and the limit, so far as medicine is concerned, is the subjugation of my body, by Act of Parliament, to any kind of medical assault. I often wonder if I am peculiar in my belief in the sanctity of my own person. I have several times been under arrest. In my young days, over a free-speech riot; in Morocco, owing to an insufficiency of baksheesh; twice in Russia—suspicion about my passport; in Costa Rica—a little difference with the Customs; finally, in Guatemala, as a suspected revolutionist. I was never under duress more than a few hours, yet the sense of physical subjugation was intolerable. I would

willingly have shot my captors. If you are not a fool, you need not, when arrested, be personally assaulted. You submit to *force majeure* and set about your release. But a doctor claims the right, by due process of law, to strip you, make an incision in your body, and inoculate you with disease. If you agree to it, then you let the expert become your master. I, for one, most emphatically repudiate any such medical pretensions.

How, then, are we to control them? Let us grant that there is a strong medical guild. But there will be other guilds, numerically and financially stronger. Should the medical guild seek to impose its methods without the free consent and co-operation of the other guilds, I fancy the fat would be in the fire. We can do without doctors longer than without bakers and butchers. The average worker has a real reverence for his body. I recently travelled North. Opposite sat an artisan—a clean, intelligent man. We got into conversation. He told me that a son had been born to him. “A beauty, sir. I examined him from top to toe—not a blemish on him!” “You’ll have him vaccinated, I suppose?” “Me! No fear! Wouldn’t have his skin disfigured for a fortune.” This man was typical; I have met hundreds like him.

On rereading what I have written, two things I see: that owing to your question I have divagated far from my purpose of discussing the Civil Service; and, secondly, that I appear to be biased against the medical profession. Nothing could be further from my real feelings. We do not judge the Roman Church by its Inquisition; nor must we judge

Medicine by the follies of its Inoculationists. The Inquisition called for men's souls, alive or dead. If the soul were yielded alive—just a touch of torture—so much the better; if the Inquisition met with stout resistance, then it were better to end the recalcitrant life that it should not infect other souls. So with the Inoculationists. They believe that one ought willingly to submit to inoculation; that if the victim be recalcitrant better put him in gaol, lest he infect others. As experts, they claim to be masters. But the craze will pass. Medicine is peculiarly liable to crazes. (There is a man at the Club who swears he has had his appendix removed six times.) Nevertheless, behind these transient fashions, medicine tells a tale of glory; it is adding to it on the European battlefields.

Hang it! I now perceive that I appear also to have been libelling the expert. But I admire him. If you go into the Civil Service, I hope it will be as an expert. Subject to proper restrictions, the future is to the expert. You must watch carefully the drift and tendency of affairs. We have recently been writing about guilds as though they were accomplished facts. Why? Because we know that the time is rapidly approaching when the workers in civilized countries will organize themselves into large groups, which will probably be known as guilds, to the end that they may be partners in the products of their labour. Take it from me: the wage-system is tottering to its fall. When I think of the Chartist movement (for which, by the way, your great-grandfather spent nine months in gaol) and of the succeeding labour movements, I am lost in wonder

that they did not long since concentrate upon the wage-system and destroy it. Just think of it ! For a century or more the labourer has been deluded into the belief that his labour is an inanimate commodity, entering into the cost of the finished product, precisely as does cotton or coal. Believe me, the delusion is now being fast dissipated. Very good. These guilds are bound to enter into organic relations with the State. As far as I can see, it will be a kind of partnership. The State representatives on the governing boards of these guilds must be technically the equals of the guildsmen.

Assume that, in ten or fifteen years from now, the Engineers and Metal Workers form a guild. They will come to the State for a charter. The State will naturally impose suitable terms. It will want engineers to act for it. Suppose that you are a trained engineer. *Mon Dieu !* What a chance ! You will be an expert. But the guild, possessing the labour monopoly, will know how to keep you in your place.

The average bureaucrat's ignorance of industrial technique is at bottom the reason why he is held in contempt by the industrial world. And more and more, as the years pass, does this become apparent. In the old days of *laissez-faire* it did not matter, because administration was practically remote from trade and the mechanical processes. In these later days, when the State intervenes throughout the whole industrial area, when the bureaucrat necessarily comes into touch with master and man, he is very quickly found out. If he is really the master of his business, he is treated with more than

consideration, with actual deference. But, except in certain departments, technical mastery is not found in the bureaucracy. The result is that the employers impose their will upon the Government to an extent little realized by outsiders. It is curious, too, that very often these administrative interferences are in the interests of the workers. Yet they prefer the oppression of the masters, who know their business, to the protection of the bureaucrats, who are ignorant of it. In certain departments it is otherwise. The medical officer of a borough or district exercises great power and influence, but even he is apt to be bulldozed into silence by slum landlords. The Post Office is remarkably efficient, but it is a self-contained body, vested with tremendous powers. I should not be surprised to see the guild spirit spread rapidly in the Post Office. So far as efficiency and mastery are concerned, I think the engineers have it in the highest degree. Out in the Colony, a few months ago, I watched a gang of coloured workmen erecting a wireless tower under the direction of an engineer in the Public Works Department. The man, in dirty tunic and with begrimed hands, knew his work and the men knew that he knew it. They were hoisting up a steel framework over two hundred feet. The crane and the gang manipulating the ropes had to move in unison. The engineer stood in the centre, guiding and directing by the movements of his arms. He knew every man by his Christian name. "Now then, Bill, you blighter, get busy!" "Tom, you blind fool, move out of there!" "Loose her! loose her! Arturo, you God-damned son of a bitch!" he

shrieks, as the rope is held too taut. And so the great framework gradually rises and moves to its appointed place. The riveters mount the scaffold and begin to hammer. The men below rest. "Come along, you blithering bastards, and let's empty a bottle of whisky." Rows of ivory teeth sparkle in the bright sun. There is no second invitation. The whisky bottle is passed round, yielding quiet content. "The boss he swear like a Yankee," says one of them, "but he know what's what." An hour later, bathed and dressed in immaculate white, he steps up on the verandah of the Polo Club. He drops into a wicker-chair next to a female bundle of well-laundered flounces. Lazily he crosses one leg over the other, disclosing a silk sock tightly drawn up by a suspender. He addresses his neighbour in the gently modulated tones of a Castilian don.

If you go into the Civil Service, my boy, enter it as an expert and not as an anæmic quill-driver. But if you try to steal power instead of giving humble service, by heck, old man though I am, I'll shoulder a rifle!

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

VIII: THE COLONIAL SERVICE

MY DEAR GEORGE,

It will not have escaped your philological eye that a man goes into the Civil Service, but not into the service of business. No; he says he is going into business. But a domestic goes into 'service'; and occasionally one hears of some servile under-strapper who says he is 'in the service' of Mr Smith. In like manner, an officer goes 'into the Service'; so also does a private or a bluejacket. These distinctions are suggestive. Service denotes discipline and obedience. Discipline clearly indicates a hierarchy or a command; obedience indicates willingness to obey. Thus, when an officer says he is 'in the Service,' he really means that he belongs to the Service only in the sense that he belongs to the command. It is true he may be a mere cogwheel in the command, bound to obey his superior officer. But he knows that he is serving an apprenticeship and hopes some day himself to be in actual command. A private or bluejacket has no such expectation; obedience is his lot to the end. It is not substantially different in the Civil Service, where discipline is maintained by the same principle of classification. On the other hand, when a man 'goes into business,' by implication he rejects the discipline of service and is quite frankly 'on his own.' He is bent on piracy.

If you think of it you will realize how important are discipline and classification in the Government service, particularly from the possessing classes'

point of view. For it is to a closely integrated and homogeneous Governmental organization that we must look if we are to preserve intact the existing social and economic life of the nation. Our social structure may be fundamentally wrong or it may have grown rotten by age and wrong usage. I am too old to be under any illusions. I know it to be morally rotten and I believe it to be fundamentally wrong. What I think hardly matters. I shall soon "go hence and find it is not so" (I hope you read Matthew Arnold); but you and your generation will soon be facing reconstruction, whether you like it or fear it or hate it. It matters enormously that you should see through the conventions and grip firmly the realities. I often wonder whether Oxford and Cambridge clear or obscure our social vision. It is certainly odd, and even significant, that whereas the university students of Eastern Europe are overwhelmingly revolutionary, the students in the universities of Western Europe and America (that is to say, the industrialized countries) are overwhelmingly conservative and conventional. Only the other day I was dining with a Harvard graduate, and a D.Ph. to boot. He seriously argued that John D. Rockefeller must be *ipso facto* a great intellectual force. "*Intellectual?*" I shouted. "Yes," he drawled, "just intellectual." As he was my guest I found it safer to discuss the vestigial traces of Maya civilization in Central America. But I mustn't divagate. It is certain that, given a social organization, the Government service will respond to the wishes of the dominant factors in the body politic. Hence the necessity for classifica-

tion. The ruling factors in the service must be the bone and flesh of the ruling factors outside. And the ruling factors inside base themselves upon the monopoly of the first-class clerkships. I dare say you know that the abyss between the first and second class clerkships is as deep and impassable as the abyss between the commissioned and non-commissioned ranks in the Army and Navy. I see that the Socialist journals, which I assiduously read, are rejoicing that, under the pressure of the war, promotions from the ranks are now numerous. They are very stupid. They fail to understand that a promoted sergeant of pleb origin would be always on his good behaviour, just like a Labour man in Parliament. It is to me astounding that the ordinary Socialist and Labour papers are so utterly ignorant of the psychology of the class whose claims they advocate. But I suspect that the great majority of the promoted soldiers belong to the same class as the officers themselves. Anyhow, you may bank on it, the Army hierarchy is not so foolish as to introduce social dynamite into the mess. No, indeed! They are even careful to keep it out of the canteen. To any threatened invasion by a real democracy of the Army, Navy, or Civil Service our mandarins would all show their teeth and shout: "Hands off!" Between ourselves, I should find it very amusing to see some of their teeth drawn!

There is, then, an implied contract that on entering the Service you must do your share to preserve the social order. No nonsense about that! You would not be told in plain terms that rent, interest,

and profits are sacred. The governors of Great Britain are more subtle. You would be told that this is a democratic country and that, in consequence, you must show courtesy and consideration to all, to the lowest as to the highest, to rich and to poor. Courtesy and even sympathy not only cost nothing, but bring a rich reward in the contentment and docility of the working and lower middle classes. When a deputation of working men has been to you, let them report to their mates that they were treated like "bloomin' dooks." If no 'interests' clash you must yield gracefully, assuring them that no act of your official life has given you greater pleasure. If rent or interest is affected your task is not so easy. There are, however, various ways to 'fob 'em off.' You can generally raise the question of expense. If hard put to it you can damn the Treasury, which is always willing to play Jorkins to your Spenlow. Or you can play for time. "The subject is most interesting, gentlemen, but several novel points have been raised, demanding our most careful and anxious consideration. I know you would not expect this department to act precipitately. In your own interests it would be most unwise to do so," etc., etc. If this cock won't fight, then you can ask the deputation if they have the necessary capital to carry on the business, because you fear—in fact, you know—that the employers would not continue if such onerous responsibilities are thrown upon them. I know no easier task than to fool a working-class deputation. You must sedulously act the part of umpire, but you must never give your own side out. If you do, good-bye to promotion.

Suavity, you perceive, is the first essential to success in the Civil Service. The second is like unto it. Talleyrand summed it up in his historic phrase : *Pas trop de zèle*. You do not always know what your superiors are really aiming at ; and, if you do, it is unwise to betray your knowledge. Every great official likes to think that he is a second Machiavelli. Nothing annoys him so much as to see that you have spotted his game. There is no room in a Government office for Vorticism. Out of too much energy you may draw the wrong pattern or brew the wrong emotion. On the other hand, do not ape humility too much. Always nurse a grievance and, on due occasion, trot it out. A very clever civil servant once told me that he was offered a small promotion in lieu of a grievance. He declined it. "No," said he ; "my grievance is worth more than that." So, to quiet him, they finally made him an 'Assistant-Comptroller' or something of the sort. He not only got an improved status, an increased salary, but also—oh, joy !—two carpets, a hearth-rug, and a fire-screen. One of these days they will knight him.

Do not believe, however, that I take an altogether cynical view of the Civil Service. Wellington, with Irish terseness, remarked that the King's Government must be carried on, and it is the Civil Service that carries it on. Its political chiefs pass, some too quickly, most too slowly ; the Service works on—and sometimes sleeps. I freely admit that the vast majority of its members work conscientiously. They have mostly joined because they want, in the days of their youth, that *otium cum dignitate*

which ought only to come with extreme old age. That, I suppose, explains why so many of them are quite old and formal at thirty-five instead of at seventy. But they have brains, and our Government offices are well informed and far-seeing. Our Diplomatic Service is really the best in the world. It combines subtlety with strength, and it always has something to bring to market. The Colonial Office, too, is remarkably efficient in many ways. It has always restrained excesses in the employment of natives. Planters and prospectors have often gnashed their teeth when forbidden to "wallop their niggers" or starve them. Now, in our days of trial, the result is shown in comparative quiet throughout our Dominions. The result justifies the Colonial Office; I am not so sure that it justifies the negroes and other subject-races. Thank goodness, it is their affair and not mine. I wonder whether the Kaiser does not bitterly regret that his friendship with God hardly suffices to induce the Almighty to transform negroes into Irishmen. It is the Colonial Office which trains our Proconsuls and Satraps, who subsequently govern vast territories and variegated races with skill and address, and occasionally with genius.

A Colonial Governor has his thrills. I wonder what all our Colonial Governors felt when, on the outbreak of war, each went to his safe and took out a sealed envelope marked: "To be opened only in the event of war." The instructions contained in this envelope (which had been handed down by predecessor to successor I know not how many times) will probably remain a secret. The Governor sits

alone, reads the portentous documents, finds himself suddenly changed into an autocrat, with sweeping powers to imprison, deport, or even shoot or hang, with a full indemnity promised by his Sovereign Lord and King. Do you know, I think I should like to be a Colonial Governor. But to get there means a long series of gradations and no end of puzzling problems—unpleasant tasks, too. I once drifted into the office of a very high official. He had just been in to discuss with the Governor a number of questions. Then they fell to discussing Greek. My man quoted from Aristophanes. The Governor didn't recognize it and asked that it be written down. So said, so done. "Your accents are wrong," said the Governor. "Very likely. I'm weak on accents, but I think I'm right." "Let's look it up," said the Governor. So they verified the quotation. I forget who was in the right of it; I tell you of the incident to illustrate that my official was highly cultured. He took a first in Mods. as a matter of fact. In the course of his career, he had been stationed in China. In his district they requisitioned ten thousand Chinamen for South Africa. They had to be medically examined, and, no doctor being available, this task was added to his other duties. A hateful job. "They ought to have given you a seat in the Lords and ten thousand a year," I remarked. "I kept my own work up to the mark all the time," he replied grimly.

Puzzling problems, too! Up in Corozal, in my colony, there were repeated complaints of a water shortage. We drink rain-water out there. The water is collected and run into great tanks during

the rainy season. Toward the end of the dry season these tanks ran dry. "Give us more tanks," cried the natives. The Government procrastinated. At this time it was discovered that there were two or three cases of leprosy in the colony. So an ordinance was passed to build a small leper hospital and segregate these cases. It chanced that one of them was Peter Hamilton, of Corozal. He was a harmless old nigger. He would sit outside his little shack, where he lived alone, and chant a queer negro melody :

My Mammy say dat I am her love,
De sun goes down in de west ;
My Mammy say, "Good-night, my love,"
De sun goes down in de west.

Down among de sugar canes, I see Mirandy,
De sun goes down in de west ;
I call out, "Mirandy, be my love,"
De sun goes down in de west.

Mirandy, she bring to me a little piccaninny,
De sun goes down in de west ;
An alligator cotched him in de great Mississippi,
When de sun went down in de west.

In this way did Peter tell us all about his life, its loves, its hardships, its toil and care. I used to bring him cigarettes and sometimes a nip of rum. "Tank you, Mistah, I will sing you ma little ditty." Then somebody told him that, very soon, he must go to the new leper asylum. Peter said he would rather stay where he was. They told him that there was a new law. That night, when the sun had gone down in the west, Peter drowned himself in the one remaining tank of drinking-water.

Next day the D.C. and the M.O. met in anxious conclave. What was to be done? The M.O. said that the water was unaffected and not harmful to health. The D.C. couldn't stomach the thought of letting the people drink any more from the tank. So they telegraphed to the Governor for instructions. More consultations. Finally, they ran the water off and sent up a schooner laden with water-barrels.

Yes, on the whole, if I were a young man going into the Civil Service, I should choose the Colonial Office. My only advice to you is to go into something that involves a minimum of desk work. Do things; don't only write about them. I should hate to see you with a silk hat, an umbrella, and a black-leather portfolio, travelling up and down a suburban line, discussing coins, china, and flowers with your own little coterie. It would not be long before a smudge on your well-polished boots would give you acute discomfort.

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

IX: COMMERCE

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I gather that you are now minded to reject all the professions and the Civil Service. Remains that cruel and indeterminate world of activities known as business. I suppose it means that you 'busy' yourself about something not otherwise defined. If you are a banker or a manufacturer, you are in business ; if you are a commission agent, you are in business ; if you are a commercial traveller, you are in business. If you are a farmer or a planter, somehow, and for a reason not known to me, you are not in business. I was amused when, on a boat coming up the coast of Central America, I asked a friend of mine who owns a very small plantation, who a very prosperous and pompous-looking fellow-traveller was. "Some damned drummer," came the instant reply. My friend suffered from a perpetual overdraft at the bank ; the 'damned drummer' turned out to be quite rich. No planter in the world, large or small, would admit that this successful travelling vendor could be recognized as in the same social scale. I do not defend it ; but it is probably more due to a rooted instinct than to snobbery.

After all, the man who tills the soil and feeds us must know his social worth. Add the fact that, from time immemorial, the farmer has been preyed upon by the trader, and we may get at the psychology of the farmers' universal aversion to traders. A farmer thinks in seasons ; a trader in minutes. The one mental process involves a habit of patience and slowness ; the other impatience and quickness.

Perhaps, then, we may recognize that fear is intermingled with aversion. If you have dealings with a man who is mentally more alert than yourself you are wise to fear him. The mental abyss between the two types by no means ends here. Listen to the conversation of farming folk ; it is frank and free from *arrières pensées*. Listen to traders : they speak as though beset with reservations and trickeries. The simplicity of the farmer is at once his strength and his weakness. On really essential issues he will not budge without great deliberation ; on matters of less importance he is perpetually the victim of the trader's wiles. I sometimes think that traders would do well to aim at greater simplicity and directness. In a business 'deal' between a Quaker and a Jew, I would back the Quaker. Taught from youth to concern himself only with things of value and to be as truthful in the counting-house as in the parlour, he would go straight to the point, simply yet decidedly. The child of the money-changers, imaginative and alert, would ultimately come to the Quaker's terms or reject them.

Greater than he who takes a city is he who makes a fair bargain. A fair bargain is when both parties to the contract are completely satisfied. How far has modern commerce carried us from that ideal ! The fall from that ideal is the measure of our fall from grace : it is the 'mark of the beast' upon our commercial and industrial life. In commerce, we positively admire a man who 'gets the best of' or 'does' another man in a bargain. We have sunk so far into the immorality of false bargaining that the man who is worsted in a deal actually envies

the winner. "Very clever," he says to himself. "I'll try the trick on somebody else." I wonder whether they have taught you at Cambridge that the habit of false bargaining is rotting and corrupting our national fibre. I fear they haven't. The authorities of St Paul's Cathedral took Hooley's gold vessels. They were not deterred by the cynic's suggestion that, at the appropriate moment, they should sing, "Hooley, Hooley, Hooley." A friend of mine, who has prospered amazingly, who also knows the true inwardness of business, told me that he had only one defence. "I cannot defend poker on ethical grounds ; yet I play it. We sit at the table and each of us knows that, except as a game, it would be intolerably wrong. If I went into business as a duty to be seriously and conscientiously performed to the community, my gorge would rise at the hypocrisy of it. No, my dear Tony, it won't bear thinking of in the way of duty. My only defence is that I play it as a game, precisely as I play poker or auction. And I get more fun out of business than out of cards or golf." He was once concerned in a lock-out with his associated employers. He secretly rationed the families of his own employees and chuckled delightedly when the men won. "I was really the saviour of my own side," he afterward said to me, with a laugh. "Our fellows are fools not to see that high wages pay best all round." But is this a real defence ? Of course not. Apart from the obvious fact that what is fun to Harold Martin is misery to the wage-earners, no man should turn the lives of men and women into counters in a game. It is dreadful even to think of.

Observe that two strains of thought run through the argument. The first, that life is an infinitely precious thing ; the second, that false bargaining degrades life.

The most urgent danger of the war is that we may subsequently appraise life too cheaply. I can only hope that, regarding our cause as just, we may convince ourselves that the lives spent in its prosecution were sanctified and ennobled. I wonder ! Be that as it may, I dogmatically assert that life is the most precious thing known to us. A live dog is better than a dead lion ; with life pulsating through us, are we not a little lower than the angels and crowned with glory and honour ? But what happens in our body politic ? We reduce the lives of the overwhelming majority of the population to a mere commodity ; then we buy it at one-third of its actual value. You say it is a bargain between capital and labour. So it is ; but it is a diabolically unfair bargain, based upon a hideous misconception of the nature and possibilities of human life. For when a man sells his health and strength (necessarily upon compulsion, for his alternative is starvation), he sells something which does not truly enrich the buyer and leaves him poor indeed. In many ways we have travelled beyond Ruskin, but his distinction, afterwards emphasized by William Morris, between wealth and illth remains valid.

I am forced, then, to the conclusion that our system of industry and commerce is based upon a tragic error. Labour is not only the victim of an unfair bargain, but, conceived to be a mere commodity, it is the subject of an immoral bargain.

It is the unforgivable sin—the bargain of prostitution. A woman sells her body—horrible! A man is cunningly reduced to selling the bones and sinews of his body as a commodity. Is it not equally horrible? Point out to me any essential difference between a woman of the pavement and a sandwich-man of the pavement. I am usually regarded as an easy-going man of the world. And so I am. But sometimes, when I get down to the realities, I think of Kirke White's passionate cry: "If this be their justice, God of the red right arm, where is thy thunderbolt?" Some day a great statesman will arrive (why should it not be you?) who will not only denounce the commodity theory as a devilish contrivance, but also sweep away the wage system which is built upon it.

If you can endure with some complaisance the existing social contract (as I have had to do), then possibly, and even probably, you can succeed in business. The business world is divided into two main divisions—the industrial and the commercial. There follow, of course, endless subdivisions. Broadly stated, commerce buys and sells at a profit; industry makes and sells at a profit. For the life of me, I cannot advise you to enter industry rather than commerce. Suppose you go into commerce. You become a middleman. You can range over thousands of manufactured articles, buying at bottom prices and selling as high as the market permits. You can only hold your own by giving considerable credit, and, in doing this, you risk bad debts. But the position of all middlemen grows every year more precarious because the manufacturers as a body are

every year coming closer to the consumers. But the work is more congenial than factory production. Your long suit, if you go into commerce, is the variety of opportunity open to you to exploit the world. As a 'national' of the great British Empire your opportunities are not easily numbered. It is so much easier to exploit the labour of our subject races than to exploit British labour, particularly when you are constantly confronted with the law of diminishing returns. (It is not really a law. Law is a word that is thoughtlessly employed by our professional economists.) But before you resort to Colonial or foreign exploitation, it is just as well to remember that there are a number of 'respectable' commercial occupations—banking, stockbroking, insurance, accountancy, and the like. The banks, by sweating their clerks, pay big dividends. An employee in the insurance world does much better than a bank clerk. Then there is finance, that strange and sinister function of modern capitalism. If you 'get in with the right set,' you can make money in finance, providing your conscience lets you sleep o' nights. If I had to start in business again, I should like to be an average adjuster. Do you know what that is? I'm sorry I can't tell you with any degree of accuracy. It has something to do with adjusting mercantile insurance claims, and its findings are quasi-judicial. I have met average adjusters in various parts of the world. They have always seemed to be oppressively prosperous. Architects and surveyors also seem to do very well. I have met one or two 'quantity surveyors' who appeared to have a 'good thing.'

I do not doubt, however, that in all these apparently comfortable occupations you will find the proverbial 'nigger in the wood-pile.' Depend upon it, a civilization based upon the dehumanization of labour breeds uncanny ghosts in every occupation, and, indeed, in every home.

I am hopeful that, in the war's cleansing process, we shall see the elimination of the army of financial sharks and touts who infest and infect London finance. Granting that finance is essential, under present conditions, to the development of business, it is self-evident that access to money should be made easy and cheap. London flatters itself that it is the financial centre of the world. So it was before the war, and it may retain the leadership after the war. But it must set its house in order. And the first thing to be done is to squelch without mercy the financial touts who claim to 'introduce' business. I can see them, even as I write, buzzing about the purlieus of Throgmorton Street, their pockets stuffed with commission notes, hurrying and scurrying between the offices of financial brokers and company promoters, offering this and that 'proposition' (each worth at least a million—in the future), prospectuses all ready-typed and occasionally printed; if they cannot squeeze the vendor, then arranging at the outset 'to be taken care of' by the broker or promoter. They must 'stand in' somewhere. Criminal lawyers, I am told, keep their 'runners' and their touts hanging round the prisons and police courts to secure causes for their principals. In like manner must some serious business-man run the gauntlet of the financial touts. Often he is between

the devil and the deep sea. He wants money but is ignorant of London ways. He is introduced to 'somebody in the City.' This somebody, who in reality is a nobody, says that he knows where the money can be obtained. He is quite certain. If our manufacturer or inventor will place himself in his hands, it can be done quickly. Then they get to business. A commission note is drafted, by which instrument the vendor agrees to pay ten or fifteen per cent. commission upon any capital the 'somebody in the City' may procure. The days that follow are tragic. Our expectant vendor, daily buoyed up by encouraging reports from our 'somebody,' kicks his heels in some London hotel, waiting, waiting. Meantime our 'somebody' has not been idle. He proceeds to interview various 'financiers' and agrees to divide his commission. It is very seldom that any results are achieved. Our vendor's time and money have been wasted. No doubt a tout sometimes scores a success, particularly when there is a boom. When investors went crazy over rubber a number of fortunes were made by men who had previously been living on borrowed half-crowns. A financial journalist once introduced a thriving business to a company promoter who subsequently 'did time.' The deal was consummated and the journalist obtained £25,000 as his share of the plunder. Think of it! For an hour or two's conversation, the community has to screw out annually a thousand golden sovereigns in perpetuity. Waste!

When I was a young man, before you were born, I travelled through Canada. I there met an agricultural machine maker who wanted capital. In a

light moment I promised to do what I could for him. He was a simple-minded man, inventive and skilful in his trade and open as daylight. On my return to London, I interviewed one or two men I knew. My Canadian friend wanted £20,000. The sum was voted too small by the Londoners. I did not then understand that what they meant was that there was no margin for plunder. I gave one or two commission notes in fear and trembling, but resolutely kept the negotiations in my own hands. Finally, by devious ways, and after endless delays, I got into the private office of a 'great financial man.' I was told that London finance trembled at his word and whispered in his presence. His private secretary first interviewed me. Yes, he thought the great man was really interested. He would see me in a few minutes. But before going into the august presence he would like to hint that as private secretary he could make no kind of provision for himself *before* the negotiations, yet he might say that a good deal depended upon himself, and no doubt a suitable acknowledgment would come later on. I gravely replied that my friend would doubtless suitably express his gratitude. Ushered into the sanctum, the great man glanced over the papers. "Cable your principal to come over by the next boat," he said. So my confiding friend got to London in a fortnight. A month later his company was floated for £250,000, and my friend received £5000 in cash and 45,000 shares.

There's money in finance, my boy, if your conscience will let you sleep o' nights.

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

X: INDUSTRY

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Have you noticed that the manufacturers have arrogantly seized the word 'industry' and applied it to their own use? It is true that we still occasionally speak of the agricultural industry—the natural meaning of the word in this instance persisting—but nowadays, if a man 'goes into industry,' we take it to mean that he is concerned with factory production. Hogarth's "industrious apprentice" was, I think, a linen mercer. But we should not say that he was in the retail, or even the wholesale 'industry,' no matter how 'industrious' he might be. No; he was in the linen trade—a trader. I suspect that the manufacturers stole the word, believing that it was only in mill and factory that men—and incidentally women and children—were really industrious, in sharp contrast with agriculture, which is apparently a lazy and pedestrian occupation. Look at the Stock Exchange quotations. 'Government Bonds,' 'Railways,' 'Industrials,' and 'Miscellaneous.' You will find no agricultural undertaking included in 'Industrials.' The political economists naturally took their cue from their masters. They wrote about the 'great industry.' They were fools. They really meant industrial elephantiasis. This disease is quite common in Central America.

And yet, let us be thankful, the world's great industry is still agriculture. Look at a map of the globe. Everywhere, save in the midlands and the north, in the Rhenish provinces, in the Eastern

States, mankind is engaged in minding the flocks and tilling the land. In France agriculture still reigns supreme. It is from the peasantry that its gold flows, gold that is now commingled with the blood of its sons. Some years ago a section of the American people tried to establish a ratio between gold and silver. Little they recked that the real ratio is between gold and blood—a ratio that in the war is gradually increasing in favour of gold. And everywhere, save in England, do agriculture and science co-operate. Only last week, on the Estate, we blew up with dynamite thirty acres of caked land. It is now almost as good as new. One catch-crop of beans to give it more nitrogen and once again we shall plant bananas. We dig in little sticks of dynamite over a radius of one hundred yards; we link them up with electric wires; the magnetos are sparked and the job is done. Nothing lazy or pedestrian about that!

I never return to England without renewing my conviction that the problem there is not only economic, but psychological. The landowners of England are as blindly obtuse, as foolishly proud, as the Spanish Dons or the Hungarian Magyars. They have created a tradition of dignified inertia. They are too proud to till their own soil; they lay burdens upon those who would that are too heavy to be borne. The landed gentry of England deserve, every man-jack of them, to be shot out of hand. These burdens are, of course, the economic side of the problem; but, psychologically considered, they are the predisposing cause of this dreadful industrial elephantiasis. Without ceremony, these *soi-disant*

seigneurs have driven English brains off the soil and into the factory towns. "You are too clever for farming, my lad; try your luck in some go-ahead town." Is that an exaggeration? I heard a Suffolk farmer say it to a promising youth. And he started the boy with a five-pound note. He felt he had done a kindly act. As things are, perhaps he had. But the tragic fact remains, whether you ascribe it to economics or psychology, British brains are concentrated in trade and industry when they ought to be equally distributed over town and country. I tremble for England's future unless the balance is redressed.

Do not mistake me. I am not arguing "wheat supply in time of war," or other flapdoodle of a similar kind. No, no! A nation that bases its economy upon the assumption of perpetual war is degenerate and in a fair way to savagery—polished and highly efficient savagery, if you will, but essential savagery. Reasonable preparation for war, yes; beyond that—look out! Even I, man of peace that I am, always, when on the Estate, have firearms ready loaded. I never know the moment that some Waika Indian, Carib or Spanish half-breed won't run amok. Indeed, last year, I shot a man. Didn't I tell you about it? Then forgive another divagation.

At the far end of the Estate, where the river runs from the north and suddenly bends round to the east, there is a bluff upon which are two cottages and a rough shack. In one of these lived Tomaso Lopez with his woman Marcella, socially known as 'Chella.' Her surname is long since lost in the mists of antiquity. Probably she herself has

forgotten it in the long succession of men with whom she has cohabited. She is of surpassing ugliness ; she is fat and lazy and her tongue is the tongue of a viper. But she exudes sex like a veritable Cleopatra, and, at each hiring season, she has apparently found no difficulty in securing a man. Certain it is that no man has ever endured her for more than a year. Tomaso was a half-breed, lean as a greyhound, a small square head covered with closely cropped brown hair, long sharp nose, throwing into bold relief a receding chin upon which grew a stubbly beard. His moustache bristled like an exhausted toothbrush. In the other cottage lived Alfonso Burgos with his girl Violeta. Burgos was a dandy after his kind : curly black hair, parted in the middle, a little pointed moustache, eyes dark and amorous. Violeta is young, slender and harmless. To Alfonso she was submissive as a spaniel. In the shack roofed with palm leaves lived, alone, Thomas Jackson, a Jamaican negro, voluble, a mischief-maker.

At sunrise Tomaso would go into the banana plantation to clean and clear the land, while on Wednesdays and Thursdays he would, in company with Alfonso, cut the bananas for the tramp steamer that comes up about midnight on each Thursday. By half-past eleven his task was generally done. He would then return to the cottage ready for the breakfast of pork and beans prepared by Chella. Then he would take his gun in search of deer or peccary, or paddle the dory in the river looking for fish. Or, if the sun struck hard from a cloudless sky, he would sit in the shade idly fingering his guitar and occasionally twanging a lilting Spanish

love-song. I can see him now, as I write, head thrown back, his long nose in the air, keeping time with his thickly padded feet, for he seldom wore either boots or moccasins. And, curiously enough, I most vividly remember his thin neck with an Adam's apple that moved up and down like a pressure gauge.

The morning of May Day breaks without a cloud. In the sky can only be seen a merciless hard light blue and a sun that seems to move by leaps out of the horizon. It is already sweltering hot before Chella rolls from under her fly-net. She sleeps in a chemise and her stockings. She throws on an old loose cotton dress, and looks out upon the river that cheerfully ripples its way over sand and pebbles, scintillating in the sun's rays—this river that, in the rainy season, will suddenly rise thirty or forty feet and angrily sweep everything before it, banks and trees and human habitations, sometimes changing its course for a mile or more in a few short hours. Some embers gleam in the brazier which Tomaso had lighted for his morning coffee. Chella kneels down and blows them into flame and is soon sipping her coffee and munching a johnny-cake. As she throws her own and Tomaso's fly-nets up over the strings she puffs and grunts. *Dios!* What heat! She sits on a box beside the door, grunting like an overfed sow. Every ten minutes or so she steps into the cottage, fills a calabash with water, and greedily drinks. The heat grows more intense. Often and yet oftener can you hear a gurgling in Chella's throat. No good! She fills the calabash, holds it up to her neck, then pours the water down

over her breasts. It is good! She grunts with satisfaction as the cool stream moves down over her protuberant belly. But, look! The sun (her only timekeeper) is now high up in the sky. Midday is near; Tomaso will soon be back and hungry for his breakfast. The thought has but found form in Chella's slow-moving brain when Tomaso lopes his way into view. He steps into the cottage, throws his machete into a corner, drinks from the alluring calabash, and is again standing before Chella. He sees the dead embers in the brazier and promptly senses the situation. With an angry bound he is on the woman. He grabs her by her loose dress, belabouring her with blows. "You lazy bitch! My breakfast! I'll kill you!" he hisses. Chella struggles to release herself from the man's grip. The dress tears asunder, remaining in Tomaso's hand. Fat and unwieldy though she be, she rushes into the bush, her only protection the chemise, the stockings, and a pair of carpet slippers. Tomaso glances contemptuously at her retreating figure. In a moment he is busy with the brazier.

At night, after Tomaso has put out his light, Chella knocks at Alfonso's door. Poor Chella! The flies and bush pests have done their worst; her body is covered with itching blotches. Who can help being sorry for Chella, gross and sensual though she be? Certainly not Violeta, who bestirs herself. She prepares food and rubs the woman's skin with coco-nut oil. Chella groans, then swears, then utters wild imprecations against Tomaso. Then she betrays the source of her greatest anxiety. Tomaso, beast that he is, has surely burnt or destroyed

her silk petticoat that is so richly lace-embroidered. If that be gone, then how will she fare at the next hiring season? For (Chella knows!) it is at petticoats that men look. . . . They soothe her to sleep, and soon she snores so loudly that Violeta fears the sharp ears of Tomaso.

The next day Tomaso goes hunting. He brings back an armadillo and a givnut (of the pig species, but striped like a zebra). Jackson goes fishing and catches three toothsome machaka (a kind of salmon-trout). They call to Alfonso and Violeta: "Come! Here is good eating!" They prepare for a gargantuan meal. Violeta kindles a big fire, Alfonso skins the armadillo, Jackson scales the fish, Tomaso cuts up the givnut. Quick! we will make merry. Curses on 'the Chief,' who keeps good liquor from us. Jackson winks knowingly at Tomaso. The Chief is not so clever as he thinks. He steps over to his shack and brings back a large bottle of fermented aniseed, most potent and fiery. They sit round on boxes, dispensing with forks—jack-knives suffice. The bottle passes round and soon tongues are loosed. Alfonso reproaches Tomaso for his treatment of Chella. Tomaso says that he will do what he likes with his own woman. Alfonso differs. He says that one should treat a woman well for a year at least. After that! He shrugs his shoulders and looks meaningly at Violeta, who cowers under his glance. Jackson laughs. He says that men are fools with women. The bottle passes with speedier recurrence. The men soon reach differing degrees of drunkenness. Alfonso, leaning on Violeta, moves unsteadily to their cottage ;

Jackson lurches over to his shack ; Tomaso lies on the floor in sleep and stupor.

When Tomaso comes to his senses the moon is already flooding the river gap with a pale silver light. The trees are gently rustled by the land breeze, which has been slightly chilled as it passes over the Western mountains. He hears the birds pecking on the trees ; a green parakeet flies to its mate—he hears its wings flapping as they beat the air. His forehead burns, so he sits at the door that it may be cooled. He gradually calls to mind the events of the past two days. He regrets the flight of Chella. After all, she could cook and knew the knack of spices and hot seasoning. Gradually he calls to mind Alfonso's reproaches and Jackson's scornful gibes. Who is Alfonso, with his pasty-faced chit, that he should preach about conduct toward women ? And Jackson, who is too surly or too miserly even to keep a woman ? A sense of intolerable grievance steals over him. He at length sees the bottle of aniseed. He drains it ; once again his brain revolves in a hot vapour. At this evil moment Alfonso goes down to the river for his evening bath. Drunk Tomaso seizes the axe, stealthily steps into the shadow of a palm-tree, and waits. Alfonso, clean and refreshed, soon reappears, and, on his way to the cottage, comes close. The axe falls with a sickening thud. Alfonso, his head split open, will never more coo like a dove to Violeta. Tomaso drags the dead body and hides it under the wood-pile.

In a few short hours, from the eastern horizon, shoot up shafts and spears and delicate tendrils of

golden light. They are the morning sun's *avants-couriers*. Another day has begun ; but Tomaso's vengeance remains insatiate. There is Jackson ; he will make short work of Jackson !

On this day, having breakfasted, I go down the steps of the Estate House on my way to the office. I hear a frightened shout, and, looking down the coco-nut walk, I see Jackson running in frenzied fear, Tomaso close behind, brandishing his machete. No joke this ! I rush back for a weapon. (Out here it is wise to keep your Mauser sighted at one hundred yards ; for close range, a Colt's automatic.) I seize the Colt, click the magazine into position, and quickly return to the verandah stairs. They are very near. I catch a glimpse of Jackson's bulging eyes ; Tomaso's machete is raised and ready. I sight him and fire. His machete falls to the ground. Again the revolver spits ; this time Tomaso falls, pinked in the leg. In a trice I am kneeling over the wounded man. His lips move, but I can only hear the inarticulate burblings of a soul in pain. We carry him into a cottage. I cut away his cotton tunic and his shirt. There is an ugly red wound just under the shoulder. We remove his trousers. The bullet has ploughed its way through flesh and bone and passed out at the back. I cleanse his leg with warm water and Condyl's fluid ; I probe for the bullet in the shoulder. I find it embedded in a network of muscles. I am very much annoyed ; this means a police inquiry unless I can keep this fool of a Tomaso quiet. I know nothing of Alfonso's death, nor of Chella, sitting in his cottage shaking with fear. But events move quickly. Violeta,

tear- and terror-stricken, comes hastening up. She has found the dead Alfonso under the wood-pile. I patch together the facts. Not a doubt about it ; Tomaso is the man. In due course he is in the hands of the law and the care of the prison doctor.

The day after the trial, conviction, and sentence of this unhappy piece of human driftwood, possibly descended from some Spanish grandee (mixing the breed is a dangerous deed) I meet the defending lawyer. "I suppose an appeal would be useless?" "Quite. Besides, between ourselves, he told me that Alfonso Burgos was his fifth, and that, if he ever gets out, Jackson will be his sixth." "'Nuff said." "He's not so lucky as a ruffian I knew down in the Petend District," says the lawyer. "He had had a lurid life. Finally he fell in love with a pious Catholic girl. Went before the priest with her. When the D.C. paid an official visit, the fellow marches up bold as brass. Says he has committed seven murders, of which there is now no evidence, but that he is a reformed character. The D.C. says he is glad to hear it. 'Of course,' the ruffian added, 'if my girl, Olive, turns me down for somebody else, I shall kill her too, and that will make eight.'"

At the point where I divagated into the story of the unhappy Chella I was about to remark that we must establish a true counterpoise between town and country. But I must close here, resuming the subject some other time. I hear the siren of the mail steamer, and the motor boat waits for me to close the letter-bag.

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

XI: ON COMMERCE

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I have already dwelt upon the distinction between the public service and business, the point of greatest interest to me being that in business a man is as independent as a pirate, with not a little of piratical romance thrown in. Particularly is this true if you stray from the beaten tracks and are not afraid of a little risk, both personal and financial. Without deviating one iota from the literal truth, I could write two or three books on the careers of merchant venturers in all parts of the world that would be read as sheer romance. I close my eyes and recall memories of strange figures in China, Burma and Persia; of Frenchmen, Germans, Belgians, as well as Britishers, not to mention one or two Chinamen and Japanese. I do not mean by this the accumulation of vast fortunes; that is the least romantic feature of their lives and generally the most vulgar. The wholesale manufacture of South African millionaires is in the main the most sordid story of aggrandisement in the whole of our commercial history. Rhodes, let us grant it, was an exception. He knew there were big things in life beyond his bank balance. I remember his dying words: "So little done; so much to do." They say he said it; it is probably apocryphal; nevertheless, the phrase conveys some idea of the man's restless energy. Have you noticed, by the way, that tradition has a way of putting appropriate last words into dying men's mouths? Goethe is an instance: "Light; more light." I like a man to

die true to form. Our estate manager, for example, who died the other day: he had lived a hard life; he died game. For two days he knew his fate. Was he 'resigned'? Not in the least. I saw him just before the end. He was in agonies and half the time under morphia. I never saw such a vigorous protest against the reigning power that cuts a man off in his prime. There is a phrase in the Old Testament about some ancient Israelite who, in anger, "smote his breast." I could never visualize it. And now I understood. This man, contemplating the fruitful years that might have been his, to which he felt himself legitimately entitled, literally smote his breast in unrestrained anger. "It's a damned injustice, a rotten shame!" he exclaimed, with each stroke of his hand upon his breast. "Now, I'll say good-bye to you all and the doctor can send me asleep with morphia." In this recalcitrant spirit did he die.

But I divagate! By romantic (the word has changed its meaning since Queen Victoria rounded off her life) I mean that sense of doing something really worth while and finding in it a never-failing fascination. Let me tell you the story of Jonathan Plimsoll, our local millionaire. He paid me a visit the other day. Altogether a charming time that lingers pleasantly in my memory. He came down in his motor boat, arriving just before sundown. We ate fish caught in the bay and venison killed in the pine-ridge. The sun went down behind the western mountains, splashing them with golden showers and shafts. There was no moon and so the stars came down close to us, multitudinous, and of great magnitude. The sand-flies being well behaved,

we sat out on the verandah and were lulled into lazy silence by the softly lapping lullaby of the Caribbean waves. Orion bestrode the high heavens ; Venus, with varicoloured eyes, glanced at him in passionate entreaty. To the north we saw King Charles's Wain carrying a load of sparkling jewels ; while, to the south, the Southern Cross lay against the black wall of Beyond.

Plimsoll scanned the skies through his Zeiss glasses, discovering unseen stars and unsuspected nebulae. Softly he quoted :

“ . . . in such a night
Stood Dido, with a willow in her hand,
Upon the wild sea-banks, and waved her love
To come again to Carthage.”

“ Yes,” I said, “ Matthew Arnold described that passage as ‘ drenched and intoxicated with the fairy dew of natural magic ’ ; but I like better the words in the Psalm, ‘ When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained . . . ’ ”

“ Was ever a word more exquisitely chosen ? ” exclaimed Plimsoll. ‘ Ordained ! ’ and he intoned it like the bass response in an anthem.

“ Pish ! ” I replied, “ what should two ancients like you and me be doing quoting old tags ? Tell me, now, why don't you go home ? You have made your pile.”

“ I go home nearly every year,” he answered. “ I hate the English winter and I don't like the hot season out here. But, after all, this is my home. It was here that I met romance.”

"Tell me all about it ; confess to me your sins this night."

In a Yorkshire accent, terse and fibrous, so different from the soft, formless patois of Central America, Plimsoll told me his story.

"I was born in the usual way ; went to school according to schedule ; learnt all the copy-book maxims such as 'Honesty is the best policy,' 'Seest thou a man diligent in his business ? he shall stand before kings,' and truck of that sort. Then to the Yorkshire College—now Leeds University—where I picked up French, German, and Spanish. Then into the textile business. At twenty-eight I was a junior partner ; at thirty-two, by a stroke of luck, senior partner. At thirty-five, as I wanted to see the world, I sold out at a decent price. Then began my first *wanderjahre*. I went to Vienna, thence to Constantinople. I visited Greece and drifted into Asia Minor. I stood upon the Hill of Calvary ; I stood beside Our Lord's tomb. I argle-bargled in the bazaars of Smyrna, Damascus, and Bagdad. Then I wandered into Egypt and, so to speak, shook hands with that hoary old fraud the Sphinx.

"At Cairo I received a cable asking me to return home. So back to London I came. I was met there by a group of business-men with whom I had had dealings. 'We want you to go out to Honduras,' they said. 'Where the devil is that ?' I asked. They would all be damned if they knew, they answered, but they had spent a pot of money out there trying to get logwood for their dyes. Their man out there was always going to begin, but some-

how got no forrader, so they wanted me to go out, investigate and report. I wasn't very keen about it, but they offered a fat fee, so I consented. Then I got an atlas to find out where I was going. And that is how I first came here.

“ Well, I investigated, drew up a report and recommendation, posted the document, and sailed for New Orleans. From thence I made for the Yellowstone Valley, moved leisurely toward Chicago and New York, finally reaching home. Within a week they were after me again. ‘ Look here,’ they said, ‘ we want you to run our show out there.’ ‘ You must put up thirty thousand pounds,’ I answered. ‘ All right,’ said they. So I came out here a second time. I very soon got things ship-shape. Just as the hiring season had begun I received a cable. ‘ We are putting the money into a South African gold-mine. Close down everything and return.’ This annoyed me, for I felt a liking, if not an actual fascination, for the tropics. I obeyed instructions, paid off everybody, and so went back home.

“ When I had settled with the group, I said, ‘ You don't mind, do you, if I go back and take up the business where you left off ? ’ ‘ Right-o ! ’ said they ; ‘ you go with our blessing. Pick up anything that belongs to us. It is now yours.’ So I came out a third time. I began modestly, cutting logwood and mahogany. I soon found that the best stuff was in Yucatan.

Now in those days Yucatan was only nominally under Mexico ; it was really run by one or two big families and some tribal chiefs. We used to

get these chiefs down to Belize, fill them up with potent rum, and then make them sign contracts to deliver every kind of precious wood. And this despite the fact that a prominent Mexican, Luciano Alvaravo, held the whole Yucatan concession from Porfirio Diaz. The informality of these proceedings made me anxious. I knew that old Diaz had a sharp and heavy way with him ; that if he gave a concession sooner or later he would implement his contract. So I went to Yucatan and looked up Alvaravo. 'I have come to see you about the concession you hold from the Mexican Government,' I said. 'Where do you come from?' he asked. 'Belize,' said I. 'Absurd,' said he, 'for there are only thieves and pirates in Belize.' '*Mea culpa*,' said I, 'but I would reform—if you would make it worth my while.' 'You are the first honest man from Belize I have met ; when you go to heaven you will surely be lonely. But because you are honest and downright in your speech——' 'It's a fine way we have in Yorkshire,' said I. 'Because, then, you come from Yorkshire, since you will have it so, I will give you one-half of my concession. You shall sell and I will look after things here.' 'Agreed,' said I, 'but let's go to old Porfirio and make sure that everything is in good order.' 'You go ; I like not Mexico City,' said he.

"So I went to see Porfirio Diaz. I had good introductions. Soon I saw him. Red-hot eyes raked me fore and aft. I bowed stiffly but said nothing. 'Your business?' he asked. 'Are you going to exercise your rights in Yucatan?' I asked. He laughed. 'Where do you come from?'

‘Yorkshire,’ said I. ‘Is it any concern of yours, *Señor*, whether I subdue Yucatan or let it go to the devil?’ ‘Yes,’ said I. ‘I propose to put Alvaravo’s concession on a business footing.’ ‘You are a man of your word,’ said Diaz; ‘authority will be established in Yucatan and the Alvaravo concession will be extended five years.’ I hadn’t returned to my hotel half an hour before an equerry rode up. ‘Are you the Englishman who would damn his Excellency’s eyes?’ ‘It all depends,’ said I. ‘You are surely he. His Excellency’s compliments and will you dine to-night at the Palace—seven-thirty—a carriage will call for you at seven-fifteen. *Adios, Señor.*’ That is how Porfirio Diaz and I became friends.

“The Alvaravo concession panned out well—and I was content. When the time had nearly expired Diaz sent for me. ‘Your concession is dead,’ said he. ‘I shall not renew it—at least not to Alvaravo. I shall not renew it, in whole, to anybody. It would be politically embarrassing. Take to your hotel a map of Yucatan and with a blue pencil mark the parts you would like reserved.’ So I took a map and a blue pencil. I drew oblongs round the mouth of every river I knew; I drew circles round spots that I knew were rich; I blue’d the Mexican-Honduran frontier. Next morning I went back to Diaz. He was in gorgeous military array. ‘My requirements are modest, your Excellency,’ said I. He glanced at the map. ‘Is this as big as Yorkshire?’ he asked. ‘Yorkshire is bigger than the American continent,’ I replied. ‘If you say so, *amigo mio*; but, inasmuch as you would damn my eyes if I refused, so

shall this concession be yours. Come! I review my troops; you shall ride in my carriage.' I went back to Alvaravo. 'The concession is mine; you are out of it. But you gave me half when you had it; so now I give you half when I have it. All is as before.' Soon after came the aniline dyes, and logwood became a drug upon the market. So I left things to Alvaravo, not much caring what would happen, and started off on other *wanderjahre*. I reached 'Frisco by easy stages, and had decided to go to Japan and China, when an urgent telegram came from Alvaravo. 'Go to Chicago; await letter.' I went to Chicago and found a letter from my partner. It appeared that a powerful group of American chewing-gum manufacturers wanted their supply of chicle organized in Mexico and Honduras. They applied to Alvaravo, who referred them to me. We Englishmen make fun of chewing-gum. After all, it slightly aids digestion and is quite as harmless as chocolate. Well, I saw the Chicago crowd, and in half an hour had contracted to supply them with all the chicle they wanted.

"Then followed more busy years. After a time the American concern was incorporated. The head of it said to me: 'Plimsoll, old horse, you supplied us all right, without fuss or superfluous palaver. We're capitalizing at ten million dollars. This block of shares is yours for keeps. You're the only outside man.'

"That's all, I think," said Jonathan Plimsoll.

I answered: "It were surely enough."

"Strong man, Diaz," I remarked, after some silence.

"Yes ; an Indian ; he knew his Indians and how to deal with them. He was not the monster of cruelty he was alleged to be. The horrors of Northern Yucatan were overcoloured by the Standard Oil interests to induce American intervention. Toward the end the old man was worried by the persistent *jacquerie* of the Zapatistas and others."

"And Zapata ?"

"I will tell you what Zapata is. One afternoon, with a troop of his ruffians, he rode up to the *hacienda* of a pure-bred Spaniard, quite of the *hidalgo* type. As he sat outside, a pretty girl, the Spaniard's daughter, crossed the *patio*. Turning to his lieutenant, Zapata said: 'Get that girl for me.' The Spaniard, who had been in the house preparing for his guests, just then returned. 'Old man,' said Zapata, 'I want your girl.' The Spaniard retorted: 'You! You! You thrice-damned bastard!' Zapata laughed it off. He sat at his host's table, ate his bread and salt, toasted and passed compliments. Leisurely rising, he called four of his men. They took the old man, stripped him naked, passed a rope under his arms, strung him up to a tree, literally skinned him alive, and then filled him with bullets. A few hours later the girl rushed from Zapata's room a shrieking lunatic. They cut her throat and buried her. *Comme ça !*"

Next morning, after distributing largess with princely hand, Plimsoll went off in what the natives call the *poof-poof*. I watched it pass beyond the Point, lying in a hammock and pondering how closely allied were Chance and Romance. Then I wondered if, after all, Romance were such a shy

visitant to the haunts of men. Stray incidents and memories of my own life crowded in upon me. Of how President Grant patted my childish head and, in his slow and deliberate way, said: "God bless you. He will surely bless you." Of a wandering American who gave me a copy, unexpurgated, of Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*; of how, the following year, by strange chance, I shook hands with the poet in that little Concord house, and how he asked me if England as yet appreciated his greatness. Of whirling nights in great cities; of the ordered lawlessness of mining and lumber camps. Of nights spent in bright light during the summer solstice in Archangel, the tap-tap of military heels on the rough pavement, the clink-clink of vodka glasses and the shrill laugh of painted women, while day and night the cranes creaked as the timber was feverishly hoisted up to the decks of steamers. Of a wonderful week at the Nijni-Novgorod Fair, where meet the merchants and mendicants of East and West; of queer Tartar dances always in the end submerged in drunkenness. Of solitudes in the Sahara, far from my kind, when, try as I would, I could not measure the possibilities of the human soul. Of nights spent with thinkers and writers (being a stranger among them), when epigram stimulated argument, to be finally clinched by repartee and laughter. Of Kipling's line: "Romance brought up the nine-fifteen." Of quiet hours of inspiration, when the secrets of the heart were revealed in a flash, and, in a flash, escaped again into the void. Of Disraeli's aphorism: "Adventures are to the adventurous." I thought of the Persian pilgrims to whom the

gates of heaven opened while they slept. And I almost reasoned myself into the belief that I too, unlike those pilgrims, had touched the hem of Romance's mystical robe.

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

XII: TROPICAL

MY DEAR GEORGE,

In my last letter I broke away into one of those divagations which will surely be your death. I had just got to a point I wished to emphasize: that, apart from the economic, there is a psychological quality in the agricultural life essential to our national health. If you ask me to define it I frankly admit I'm stumped. Two points impress me. Bœotia has a certain calm, stolid outlook that gives a steadying weight to the hectic activities of town life. It is reasonably conservative. I can fancy an educated farmer living on the distich,

Things that are old need not be true;
No, foolish man, nor yet the new.

The townsman rushes hither and thither, full of fads and foibles, ready to rush into any mad adventure so long as the idea 'takes': Tariff Reform, single tax, back to the land, garden cities, and I know not what else. Our farming folk decline to be rushed. "Let's think about it for a year or two," they say. Luckily, most of these fads won't stand thinking about, and so Hodge (God bless him!) saves us from many a morass.

The second point is closely allied to the first. In your younger days did you read *Eyes and No Eyes*? I did. It succeeded *Sandford and Merton*. Well, then, have you considered the value of the agricultural eye? It sees sap. Let the world deck you out never so speciously, the agricultural eye pierces through all your glittering trimmings and pronounces

judgment. Is there sap in you? The agricultural eye sees it. Are you sapless? Urban artificialities do not deceive it. When the agricultural eye grows dim the country is in a bad way.

Just now I am amusing myself by guessing how the agricultural eye regards Henry Abbott. Until recently Henry has been engaged in various mercantile pursuits in London. Henry is diabolically clever. He can keep books, single or double entry; he knows the mysteries of ledger, cash-book, and journal. He knows that if you cable to Calcutta at six o'clock to-night you can have a reply by midday to-morrow. He knows all about import and export duties. Tare and tret he takes in his stride. He can write shorthand and work the typewriter. Henry believes in method. There is nothing slipshod about Henry. Henry is married to an ex-schoolmistress and, I doubt not, his two children are models of propriety. I have seen a photograph of Mrs Henry, Henry, and their two children. It proves that Henry has lived in an atmosphere of domestic bliss—and discipline. Before the war broke out Henry was living on salary and commission. Alas! the war played the deuce with Henry's income and broke up his domesticities, turning his little suburban garden into a wilderness. Henry felt no call to military service, even though he was a Scout-master. So Henry decided to cut his old connexions and start a new career. My colleagues in London, being firmly convinced that I need somebody of method at my elbow, most considerately shipped Henry to me. Accordingly, in due course, I met Henry on the boat and proceeded to make Henry's acquaintance.

More quickly than I can tell it, I discover Henry to be a vivacious and voluble Cockney. His eyes are wide open, he seems to walk on springs, his tongue moves fealty. He has noticed things as he travelled. "You know, sir, on the Atlantic, they put the clocks on half an hour at midday. You see, we are travelling toward the sun. Funny, isn't it, sir? If ever you cross, why, sir, you'll put your watch back half an hour. That's because your back will be toward the sun. But perhaps you have already crossed?" I humbly tell him that I am not quite sure whether it is thirty-five or thirty-seven times. "You don't say, sir!"

After a day or two Henry has summed up our little capital town. "Can't make it out, sir. They close the shops between nine and ten o'clock. Funny. Just when we are getting busy in London. And they close for the day at four o'clock, just when they ought to be rolling in the shekels." I gently remind him that they open at six in the morning. "Well," says Henry philosophically, "I suppose there must be some reason for it. But in London, you know, we don't keep business hours that way." I observe that we are a long way from London. "Yes, sir; but it's part of the British Empire, ain't it?" Henry goes on: "The people seem to me to be lazy. Haven't as yet seen anybody in a hurry." I remark that in the tropics we are always leisurely in our movements; that the sun is very hot; that our blood gets thinned out. "Yes, sir; I've read something about that, phagocytes or something; but I don't feel it. And I've roughed it quite a lot. Camped out with the Scouts and

that sort of thing." "You'll come to it," I tell him.

I soon perceive that Henry has diligently read the papers as he rode twice daily in the train. He has all our pastors and masters safely docketed away in his orderly brain. Bernhardi? "He is the great exponent of Prussianism." Henry proceeds to tell me that Prussia runs the German Empire. "Another Johnny is Nietzsche. Don't suppose you've heard of him in these parts. He is the great exponent of the superman. Super means above, you know. Man above man. See?" I tell him I think so, but am not quite sure. It seems a little complicated to my simple way of thinking. "Oh! it's not really difficult, you know, sir. You must first grasp Darwin. He was the great exponent of the survival of the fittest. A very big man, sir." I tell him that I remember my teacher saying something about Darwin, but that was a long time ago. "Yes, sir, unless you keep, so to speak, in the swim, you lose track of things. Now, there was Alfred Russel Wallace. He was the great exponent of natural selection. Finding your true mate [it sounded like "mite"], you know. Very great man, sir. Died a year or two ago. Got very old and dotty. Took up with Spiritualism and Socialism, things that no sane man holds with." I ask him if Darwin is still alive. "Gawd bless you, died when I was a kid." I tell him how glad I am to have somebody to tell me all that's going on in the old world. For example, who is this fellow Marx they sometimes mention in the papers? "Why, sir, Marx is the great exponent of scientific Socialism. He wrote a book condemning

capitalism. Might as well condemn the atmosphere. Lots of Germans swear by him." I ask how old is Marx. This time Henry is gravelled. "Don't know, sir; never heard of him till lately. You'll hear more about him. He's, so to speak, the brainy leader of the German Social Democrats." And now I begin to see that in Henry's brain he has a special docket neatly superscribed 'Great Exponents.' Carlyle's name is dragged into our conversation. I politely inquire after Carlyle, since it is clear that Henry has something to say about him. "Why, sir, Carlyle was the great exponent of—I don't quite know how to put it—great manhood, heroes and that sort of thing. If you'll excuse the expression, of 'guts.' A University Extension lecturer said it to me privately. He had supper with us after giving a lecture at the Calvin Street Congregational Chapel. I took it down in shorthand for our monthly magazine. It was splendid. Its title was 'Great Thinkers.' It's fine to belong to the British Empire. Take it from me, sir, there's always solid thinking behind our great thinkers. The German philosophers are dreamy or brutal. No happy mean, if you take my meaning. I didn't mean a pun." And Henry crackles merrily. J. S. Mill was the great exponent of modern political economy. Ruskin was the great exponent of beauty—'arts and crafts,' and that sort of thing, you know. A bit dreamy. Didn't know anything about real life. Then there is Mendel. Take it from me, sir, a coming man. He is the great exponent of scientific breeding. A disciple of Alfred Russel Wallace. Knows a lot

too about digestion. Says we ought to eat a particular kind of cheese and we'll live a century. Look out for Mendel, sir."

If Henry digs deep into science and philosophy, he does not neglect the practical affairs of life. When he knew he was coming out here he promptly invested in a book on tropical agriculture. Henry didn't intend to be caught napping. He tells me about this book. It cost seven-and-sixpence. "It's worth the money, take it from me. If you haven't read it I'll be glad to lend it to you. Now, for example, there's beans. Have you begun on beans?" I answer mildly that we are planting a few. "I'm glad to hear it, sir. Very excellent for the soil. Leguminous, you know. Then there's ground-nuts. They contain oil. I wonder if you know, sir, that there's a great demand for vegetable oils—very great. Butter and margarine, and that sort of thing." I tell Henry that we have some of them already planted. "That's most encouraging, sir. It seems to me that, even if you give science and literature a bit of a miss, you're all there when it comes to agriculture. But I've got a few tips out of this book, sir, and I dare say you won't mind my experimenting. Then, again, there's flowers. They would add to the beauty of the estate. I'm strong on begonias and fuchsias. Fine splash of colour. We'll make the estate look like Kew." Henry is too enraptured to notice my shudder of apprehension at such a prospect. "Yes, sir, we can decorate the cottages with beautiful flowers." I try to cool his enthusiasm by telling him that where there is rich colouring in flowers there is generally sugar; that

where there is sugar there will be at least a million ants ; that ants in a house are a pest. " Ah, yes, ants," chirps Henry ; " now, speaking of ants, have you read Sir John Lubbock ? . . . "

Next morning duty calls me to the Estate. I arrange that Henry, who is still in quarantine (small-pox stalks abroad) shall come down on the schooner three days later. He dutifully sees me off. " So-long, sir ; see you on Saturday night. I'll look round the estate on Sunday and get to business on Monday morning." The engine thug-thugs, the boat moves quickly from the wharf. I am quit of Henry for a space. Now for a quiet time !

The schooner drops anchor alongside the pier on Sunday morning. Negroes, half-breeds, women and children of every shade of colour crowd the decks. I discern Henry and bid him welcome. Henry is full of discoveries. The niggers are a jolly lot. You can make 'em laugh as easily as tickling a child. I grimly remind him that our problem is to make 'em work. He tells me that the ' piccaninnies ' are delightful. I tell him that we do not call them piccaninnies out here. He's sorry ; he'd read somewhere that they were so known. Henry is loquacious and vigorous. He'll just take a wash and brush up and look around a bit. I show him to his quarters and hope he'll be comfortable. He reminds me that he knows how to rough it. I introduce him to his fellow-clerks and make a bee-line for the Estate House. It's too hot to-day for Henry's discourses. After dinner I light a cigar and stroll down past the commissariat and the labourers' cottages. It is dark, for there is no moon. I hear a lively

conversation in the boat captain's cottage. "He's a quaint bird," rumbles a voice; "thinks we're very 'interesting and amusing'"—the last words in good Cockney imitation. They all laugh good-naturedly. "Yes," says somebody else; "he wants us to go in for what he calls intensive cultivation. Read about it in some damned book." "What's intensive cultivation?" is asked. "Don't know; some tripe he's picked up. Says they do it in Belgium." "Asked him to play poker. Said it wasn't an English game and had no scientific basis." Then they laughed again.

Next morning I ask the timekeeper to show Henry around and not to let him get out of sight. So Henry is put upon a trolley and a mule pulls them down the tram-line. It is cut through virgin forest where are tigers and wild deer and all manner of living things that crawl or run or fly. As they pass over a swamp they take Henry to a pool and show him an old alligator with its back barnacled like a ship's bottom. A young alligator drops from an overhanging branch, splash into the water. The old fellow just turns slowly round and leers at Henry through wicked eyes. Henry springs back in terror. They take him on to cultivated fields, where he sees beans and ground-nuts and hundreds upon hundreds of acres of pale green banana-trees that rise up twelve or fourteen feet then gracefully bow down and rustle in the breeze. He sees orange-trees and majestic mahogany-trees. The rich and seemingly unconquerable luxuriance and fertility of tropical land leave Henry speechless. Gone are his dreams of begonias and fuchsias (look at those orchids!); his

theories of intensive cultivation are blown upon with deadly effect. And the next day they mount Henry upon a mild-mannered mule and tote him through twelve miles of coco-nut trees that bend defiantly toward the sea, thriving upon the fierce north-easters it sends to subdue them. And the morning and the evening are the second day. Henry returns in a piano mood.

I next asked Henry to come to the Estate House to take some letters in shorthand. He sits down and fidgets. "Beg pardon, sir," he says, "but I've been talking to you like a bally fool. Of course, you were pulling my leg a bit. But I never dreamt that it was so rich out here. It leaves me without words." And (believe me or not, as you like) Henry is suddenly surcharged with emotion, for a new vision has come to him. "That's all right," I reply soothingly; "we must all learn the lesson of humility out here. I feel just as you do. Take this: 'DEAR SIR,—I am duly in receipt of your letter of the 30th ult.'"

"What spacing do you like on the typewriter, sir?" "Double spacing and a wide margin," I answer. The agricultural eye looks with favour upon Henry, who is now one of us.

This divagation into Henry's pilgrimage means, I fear, that once again I must postpone my threatened dissertation upon industry as an occupation. The night grows late. The breeze has swung round from the sea to the land (do I bore you with constant references to the winds and breezes? Remember they are veritably life to us), and marvellous multi-form moths, driven hither from the trees, flutter in through open doors and windows. They strike

against the punkah lamps and cluster on walls and ceiling. On the paper, as I write, drops a large ladybird, harbinger of good luck. Against the wire netting an ugly and ominous bat rattles and scrapes. It is the vampire of story and legend. Out in the paddock it settles upon the necks and haunches of the horses, sucking their blood. It drinks to repletion. Then, like the ancient Roman feasters, it deliberately sickens itself that it may drink blood again. It reminds me of the modern profiteers. Surfeited with one profit on production, they unload and take a second on consumption. One more pipe. I walk up and down on the verandah. Two miles out at sea a tramp steamer glides northward. Five thousand tons at fourteen knots. In two days it will be crossing the Gulf of Mexico, bound for Galveston, where it will load cotton for Liverpool. Having faced the Atlantic, is it destined to be sent to the bottom by some torpedo? The captain is a kindly fellow. The last time he was here we dined at the same table. I pray Neptune to strike with his trident any submarine that would do my friend an injury. The thought that this boat is bound for England fills me with a yearning to go back. I am oppressed with loneliness. Over there you are writing a new history in blood, amid the ferment of a million brains. I reflect, however, that out here, in this lonely outpost, we fly the flag, we feed our people, we send what men and succour we can command. As Henry puts it, "We are doing our bit."

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

XIII: ON MANUFACTURE

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Vainly have I struggled in my last two letters to give you some kind of guidance along the dangerous paths of industry. I must in this letter try to get to the point before something lures me from the straight and narrow path. I think I have already distinguished between commerce and industry—the former as selling at a profit, the latter as making at a profit. From the purely economic point of view, there can be no doubt that the manufacture of commodities is more valuable than merely to organize their sale. Nor do I doubt that, as the years pass, the man who owns machinery will be in a more stable position than the man who controls a selling organization. Provided you are making something of real utility, you may be sure that, other things being equal, you will become and remain an eminently respectable member of society.

Glancing recently over a subversive book with an innocent title—*National Guilds*—I came across two passages: “Not the least happy consummation of the Guild system will be the triumph of the inventor and the conquest of degrading Labour by the machine that displaces it—displaces it to its spiritual and material advantage, and not, as to-day, to its further degradation and reduction to the ranks of the unemployed or unemployables.” And again: “Machinery has already supplanted slave labour in the Occident; and, just as machinery has destroyed slavery, so more perfect machinery is destined to destroy wagery.” (The word ‘wagery,’

sounding as it does like slavery, gives me an uncomfortable feeling—makes me suspect that the system is an abomination. I wonder !) But the point to note is that these modern guildsmen are not afraid of machinery ; on the contrary, they welcome it. The old Trade Unionists hated all mechanical improvements. That is a most important and significant change in intellectual outlook and attitude. If the new ideas portend the destruction of capitalism (remember that wagery is its foundation), in engaging in machine production (I mean on its technical side) you are not offending the *Zeitgeist* ; you are, in fact, consciously or unconsciously, one of its votaries. Distinctly a comforting thought. The writers of this disquieting book go further : they distinguish between qualitative and quantitative production. I am only a simple-minded planter, far removed from the turmoil of civilization, but I can see clearly that any intelligently organized community must learn this lesson at the peril of its soul. I remember, as a young man, attending a lecture by William Morris on “Useful Work and Useless Toil.” (It was afterward published in a book called *Signs of Change* ; buy it and read it. Put it on the same shelf as Matthew Arnold’s *Culture and Anarchy* and Ruskin’s *Munera Pulveris*.) There is a craving, a hunger, in all of us to do beautiful work ; you must degrade a man, either spiritually or economically, before he will readily succumb to useless toil. As with the individual, so with the community : there must be quality in the work of its artisans or it inevitably sinks. If you go into industry, I implore you to

remember that the soul of a people shows as much in its workmanship as in its literature or its arts.

In this vital element of national life Great Britain is at the parting of the ways. I am often ashamed by various symptoms of British industrial life. For example, Central America, from Mexico down to Brazil, is plastered with British advertisements. Of what? Somebody's beer, somebody else's whisky, another's gin, yet another's stout. In the minds of Central American natives, Great Britain is the home of intoxicants and financial sharks. Industrial England! I know that the impression is false; but has it no significance? Of course there is a simple reason. Quantitative production, to be profitable, demands huge sales; advertising helps; hence these ugly appeals to a population that would be better without these particular commodities. There is this consolation: these whiskies, gins, and beers are the best of their kind. But cannot we turn our artisans' labour to better account? If we cannot we are doomed. I am not a moralist. I do not put it on moral grounds; it is a plain and palpable fact. All down the centuries, long before Christ, a rebirth has been the essential of salvation. A rebirth means a change of heart. Believe me—I am in desperate earnest—there can be no change of heart without a change in the spirit of our work. Which is *post hoc*, which *propter hoc*, I do not pretend to know. But the main fact I know as certainly as I know the difference between a truth and a lie.

It is interesting and suggestive to note the differing manners of the commercial travellers who come from England to sell their goods. Goods! Look at the

word! Our whisky and gin visitors are distinctly swagger—one of them travels with a valet. They come with all the latest catch phrases of English society; they are tailored in Bond Street. They bring their golf sticks, tennis rackets and fishing-rods. They are put up at our clubs; they give quite a tone to our society. At the hotel bar you can hear the popping of champagne corks; the best cigars are demanded, and damn the expense. Thus do they flash across our little horizon, finally disappearing in an artificial atmosphere of noisy good-fellowship. Anon lands a quiet, unpretentious man, who takes an ordinary room and unostentatiously goes about his business. He sells cotton goods, boots, food-stuffs, fabrics—useful things. Is not the contrast symptomatic? A few weeks ago a patent medicine drummer came to town. He was an ex-music-hall performer. He gave what he called a ‘stunt’ at the cinema. Everybody asked who he was. “Why, don’t you know? He sells——” Are all our satirists dead? If you go into industry, at least remember that it has its seamy side; that damnation stalks round the machine as certainly as it lurks in the counting-house. Perhaps the writers of *National Guilds* have hit upon some vital truth. I, for one, cannot deny that some demoniacal spirit always seems to emerge in the buying and selling of machine-made products.

Yet the instinct to create with some mechanism, simple or complex, is as deeply rooted as to create with the hands. The artist knows it. A sane painter looks to his brushes and the enduring quality of his pigments; the sculptor knows the quality

both of stone and chisel; an architect has his compasses and a whole box of scientifically made instruments. The implement, in short, has developed as its master has grown. And we may agree that the passion for mechanics is as natural and praiseworthy as the passion for writing or painting. Personally, I like the mechanician. Often I envy him. I am certain that I hate to see his work exploited or degraded by the vulgarians. In the United States he is rapidly approaching his apotheosis. Sylvanus Wilkins is a case in point. Sylvanus has already graduated in the American Press, not only as an inventive genius, but as 'a great thinker.' I must tell you something about him.

From earliest manhood, Sylvanus was ultra-modern. I do not mean that he knew anything about the Symbolists, Futurists, Cubists, or Vorticists of his particular period. Sylvanus never heard of them and, if he had, would promptly have denounced them all as 'crazy.' He was ultra-modern in the sense that he saw through the little silly and solemn conventions of business life. Having proved himself a bright and useful office-boy, he considered how to better himself. His father, a man of simple piety, tried to impress him with the importance of sound Christian convictions as stepping-stones to a successful and honourable career. As they strolled past the great factory, the mainstay of the town, the loving and confiding parent told young Sylvanus how John Smith finally obtained a secure position. Times had been hard, bitterly hard, and John Smith's young family had experienced the severest privations. John Smith had searched high and low, but there

was no work for him. It seemed as though God had forgotten him. But John Smith had a faith that would move mountains. Every morning he would kneel down and pray that God's helping hand should be stretched out to His unworthy servant. And it so fell out that John Smith, on a cold and cheerless morning, never despairing, yet in depression of spirit, went to see a great merchant prince, famous for his religious benefactions. John Smith, in great humility, asked for work, however menial. Now the merchant prince was busy with a multitude of letters and answered John Smith roughly that there was no work for him. And John turned sorrowfully away. His eye, passing miserably over the carpet, descried a pin. He bent down and picked it up. The merchant prince was puzzled. John put the pin on the desk, saying : "A pin, sir. Waste not, want not." Then the merchant prince looked at John and saw signs of great suffering. And there was a dusty patch on John's trouser-knee. "How came you by that, my man?" he asked. John Smith was embarrassed, fidgeted on his feet, and nervously scraped the nap on his well-brushed hat. "Come! Tell me!" said the merchant prince, his gruff voice for the moment softened as it yielded to a kindly nature. John brushed the dust off his knee, showing great distress. Finally, for the merchant prince suspected it and pressed for an answer, John Smith, his voice choked with emotion, said that that morning, as always, he had prayed for work. The heart of the merchant prince was touched; and thus, in God's good providence, John Smith found work and faithfully served the

merchant prince. Having told this story to Sylvanus the pious father added: "So you see, my son, how God guards his children and watches tenderly over them." Sylvanus, who had listened with ill-disguised impatience, said: "Cut it out, Dad." This is what I mean when I describe young Sylvanus as ultra-modern.

Sylvanus Wilkins lived up to his creed. Impiously disregarding the commercial value of a dusty patch upon his knee-cap, he carefully creased his trousers, borrowed a natty shirt from Jeff Steele, borrowed a multicoloured tie from Pete Whelen, borrowed an imitation pearl pin from Andy Stevens, and, thus gallantly arrayed, presented himself before the works superintendent, declaring himself to be a mechanic of exceptional attainments. He was given a job as machine-minder at a greatly increased wage, and so started on a career destined to end in brilliance and wealth. Like many another urchin, Sylvanus had a natural aptitude for machinery. Nor was he a slouch. We find him attending lectures on mechanics at the Philosophical Institution. He subscribes to *The Scientific American*, *The Model Engineer*, *Hobbies*, and *The Popular Instructor*. We next get another glimpse at our hero's philosophy. He had noticed a rather rough, yet dreamy, man, walking about the machinery, apparently without aim or method. He asks what stunt the man is doing. He is told that he is a natural mechanical genius, whose improvements have made the company rich. "Don't he share in the dough?" asks Sylvanus. "Nope," comes the answer, "he's too busy thinking about his next invention to worry about the plunks."

“Boob!” says Sylvanus, “they don’t catch me giving away good notions for nix.” Early in his career, you observe, Sylvanus has grasped the fact that clever men know how to exploit genius. Nor does it take him long to discover that, no matter who invents the machine, the important thing is to register the patent.

Let us not think censoriously of Sylvanus. Let us rather admire his acumen, his agility and his address. Let us remember that he is the type of human pivot round which revolves the great industrial system, that marvellous flowering of Occidental civilization, in such vivid contrast with Oriental inertia—that Orient which barely blinked when the Roman legions thundered by, and sank into sleep again. But I anticipate. You observe that Sylvanus’s eyes were ‘well skinned,’ as they say down in Pennsylvania. Having, by his alertness, or, as Mr and Mrs Sidney Webb would say in a Fabian tract, by his efficiency, mounted to the top of the proletarian ladder, Sylvanus noted a new phenomenon. Young graduates from Harvard, Yale, Cornell, and Princeton Universities captured all the salaried posts. He knew more about practical mechanics than all these upstarts put together. Nevertheless, a great gulf divided them from him. In other words, they occupied a higher ‘status,’ as those *National Guilds* fellows put it. Sylvanus never hesitated. He had been for three years an incurable ‘tight-wad,’ so he ‘lit out’ without ‘batting an eyelid’ and ‘hiked off’ to a Western university, where, in due time, he acquired good manners and an engineering degree. He had changed his ‘status.’

I must not bore you too much with the subsequent career of Sylvanus Wilkins. The child is father to the man. As he began, so he proceeded and ended. He remained true to his early vow. He never parted with a new notion for nix. *Au contraire!* He was cunning as a weasel in extracting ideas from more ingenuous souls. Need we then be surprised that he soon became head of a manufacturing plant? Knowing Sylvanus, I should be surprised if he didn't.

It is at this juncture that Sylvanus swims into the ken of the ubiquitous American pressman, who does a 'write-up,' under the happy and altogether significant title, "A Great Thinker." This article lies before me.

The scene opens with an interview between Sylvanus and his technical adviser. Sylvanus says: "We are wasting our energies and money in the improvements we are putting into our product. I've been thinking about it and I believe our fundamental principles are wrong." The technical man protests that they are following the accepted principles of mechanics. "Then," replies Sylvanus, "we shall have to abandon accepted principles and make our own." (It reminds me of Napoleon and Soult. "Sire, if circumstances permit," said Soult. "Monsieur, I make circumstances," said Napoleon.) So experiments were begun, and after several months things looked hopeless. The factory is closed down (do not distress yourself about the workman, for the sacred principle of the 'mobility of labour' operates), and, after a long time, they 'hit it.' Sylvanus keeps going by selling various ideas acquired by his technical staff, and we are told that

several of these patents ultimately developed into big concerns.

We discover as we go along that Sylvanus has learnt that to handle men is quite as important as working machines. He remembers the lesson of the inventor in his first shop. He orders experiments to be made in a certain direction. "Give this to old Bill Baldhead, and this to little Fred Bowlegs, and this to tall Bob Skinney." Gradually our 'great thinker' gets the machine he wants, and, in due course, pouches the plunder. Sylvanus marches from success to triumph, finally ending with a new submarine that beggars description.

A rather curious thing happened at the funeral of Sylvanus Wilkins. Nobody bothered to attend it. The Mayor did not even send excuses. Sylvanus had never concerned himself with social conditions. His 'great thinking' had gone into machinery; he had no thoughts to spare on the slums that gradually accumulated round his factory. How the people around him lived did not interest him. Oddly enough, after his death, the business prospered.

Here, then, is an industrial 'ideal,' the apotheosis of the inventive and acquisitive mind. I am left wondering if it was worth while; if his brains could not have been turned to greater social advantage. Perhaps there is a more excellent way. Perhaps!

I cannot get that disturbing book on *National Guilds* off my mind. Is it possible that, when Sylvanus bought the workmen's labour, he sold his own soul?

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

XIV: CANONS OF CONDUCT

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Should you persist in your intention to go into industry, there are certain canons of conduct necessary to success. You must severely bridle your imagination. Bridle it, but do not kill it. Imagination is essential in every occupation; but it must be directed into the right channels. You need imagination, for example, to surmise accurately what your colleagues and employees are thinking. Even more important, what your customers feel and think. For it will not be long before you discover that you are engaged in a struggle for mastery with the buyers and consumers of your products. Outwardly, you must be very humble with your customers, who little think that you are at their mercy. And so you are, unless you make something that the public demands. Ultimately, it is your responsibility to create that demand. The first maxim in business is that the supply creates the demand. There are a million bankrupt manufacturers and merchants walking the streets of Europe and America, failures and wrecks, because they disregarded or did not understand the truth of this maxim. It is a little disconcerting to one trained in the old-fashioned economy which is based upon the law ("the law"! Pish!) of supply and demand. As a matter of fact, the two principles do not exclude each other; they merely belong to different categories. What demand was there twenty years ago for carpet-sweepers? In the economic sense, absolutely none. But the inventor of the

carpet-sweeper sensed some utility in it and created a demand by the usual advertising methods. I suppose there are now some millions sold every year; there is now, economically considered, an 'effective demand.' Civilization, in its material aspect, is a constantly increasing use of variegated products. So, presuming you have got an article to make that 'supplies a long-felt want,' you must convince every possible consumer that, consciously or unconsciously, he (or more generally she) has all along felt that want. You will find that psychology plays a big part in your campaign. If you succeed, you have, in fact, ceased to be the servant of your wholesale and retail customers and become their master. Nevertheless, you must sedulously maintain the pretence that you are still their most obedient servant. I will add that, whatever may be the relations subsisting between yourself and your customers, you still remain the servant of the community. Your profit is merely the clumsy and inequitable form of remuneration adopted under our existing economic system. In the old days we legalized privateering; nowadays we legalize profiteering. Our modern profiteers, forgetting this simple fact, are likely to destroy themselves by swelled-headedness. They may go the way of that great privateer Sir Walter Raleigh.

Having secured some article for which a demand may be created, your troubles are only beginning. First, you must make adequate financial arrangements. And you must stress the word 'adequate.' Do not provide for nine-tenths of your requirements when you must have ten-tenths to succeed. I

remember, as I write, several failures, some rather tragic, due entirely to a shortage of initial finance. Of course, things being as they are, you must not stake all your personal resources. You will 'let the public in on a good thing.' You will, therefore, form a joint-stock company. Do not, in your prospectus, estimate your revenue at more than twice what you expect. A wise investor always cuts a prospectus estimate in half. If you go higher than double your estimated revenue, you may subsequently find yourself the victim of extremely unpleasant legal proceedings. In the Articles of Association, take care to reserve to the directors alone the power to borrow money and to pledge the company's assets. Then see to it that you control the Board, and you can then proceed with your business, which has thus been considerably financed by other people. At the company's annual meeting you can assure your shareholders, your hand upon your heart, that the Board has been single-minded in watching the shareholders' interests. Give them a dividend and they will believe anything you tell them.

Having adjusted your finance to your requirements, your next problem will be the site and general surroundings of your factory. These are necessary desiderata: good transit accommodation, power, water, light. There are plenty of old factory sites. Avoid them like the plague. And never pay rent. Buy your land outright. This means in practice that you must start in some suitable rural district. Buy your land at agricultural prices and then transform it into urban values. Take your time about this. Fix on some happy rural village

near a junction of two railways. Make quite sure that there is an ample supply of water, preferably by an artesian well. Then buy up the whole village, particularly the manorial rights. You will, of course, seize the common rights. If any Felix Holt or village Hampden object, conciliate him. If he remain obdurate, then freeze him out. The villagers will be on your side ; are you not bringing good money to the district ? Then begin your pioneering. You will promptly build carpenters' sheds, a smithy, a machine shed. You will sink your well. You will arrange with the railway company to run a side-line on to your site. You must build some cottages for your workmen. You will, in fact, be a very busy man. Then will come the auspicious hour when your machinery is delivered and the yet more auspicious day when it is erected and ready for use. *Circumspice !* The sleepy village of Ingleby is transformed into a busy little factory town. Are you not a benefactor ? Slap your hand upon your breast ! You are an important person ; you have a stake in the country.

"Is it as easy as all that ?" you ask. No, my boy. Apart from the anxieties incident to the technical production of your particular commodity and the even greater anxieties in selling it, you will very quickly find yourself enmeshed in a network of local problems difficult to solve. First, your workmen. They find life dull after the lights and lures of town. Unless you are alive to the situation, you will find that the young workmen will leave you. They won't stay where there are no girls, music-halls, or cinemas. Inconsiderate, but natural. So you

must organize entertainments, cricket and football clubs. This involves a public hall. As you must build it to keep your best workmen, it pays to make a virtue of necessity. Open it with pomp and formality. Bring down the local M.P., who will sing your praises, which, in your turn, you will modestly deprecate. If your middle-aged workmen have families of girls, you must provide them with pretty and enticing cottages. See to it that there are as many girls in the district as there are unmarried workmen. This is what the Fabian Society calls 'social science.' There will, of course, be 'accidents,' but if you call to your aid the local vicar or rector (I never could distinguish one from t'other) and one or two Nonconformist ministers, you may rest assured that the morals of the young people will be closely scrutinized. When a wedding seems imminent, call in the young man, give him a wedding present and build a cottage for him. Do not charge too high a rent; it is not prudent to exact more than twenty per cent. on your outlay. Never part with your freehold. Your freehold is really a grip-hold on your workmen. Remember that your ultimate purpose is economic power. You must hide it under a guise of 'social service.'

Do not play any favourites between the various religious communities. You can make as much profit out of the labour of a Baptist as an Anglican. (The Salvation Army is particularly useful in providing cheap labour.) Entertain the Nonconformist ministers to lunch, on the plea that they have evening meetings; invite the parson to dinner. Be careful not to offer the Nonconformists any intoxi-

cants and remember to comment upon the evils of strong drink. The vicar will drink you level in claret or Burgundy. As a liqueur, give him Benedictine. This opens up the conversation on the relations of Church and State *in France*, which gives the parson his opportunity and does not commit you. But, in essentials, maintain equality between all the preachers. Their business is to maintain the social system of which you are by now a strong prop. They are your servants ; you are the master ; don't abdicate. Oddly enough, I first learnt this from Dudley Singleton. Just after he had been sent down from Oxford he became possessed of two villages in Bedfordshire, with the lands intervening and adjacent thereto. Dudley was not such a fool as he seemed. His sense of humour never deserted him. He swore with all the facility of the Duke of Wellington and you couldn't fool him with a horse. One evening at the club, when I was feeling bored, he descended upon me, noisy, burly, and chuckling. "Tony, old toff, damme, dine with me," he burred. He bore me off, more than half a willing captive. I regret to tell you that we drank a great deal too much. And all the time Dudley never stopped chuckling. "Tell me the joke," I finally demanded.

"Tony," said he, "behold in me—*moi qui vous parle*, as the literary guys would say—the stern and unbending defender of religious liberty and equality."

"Don't be an ass," I said ; "what do you know about it ?"

"'Twas thus. The sky-pilot who has the cure of souls down our way is soused with vinegar, believing, damn his eyes, that there is no salvation outside

the Thirty-nine Articles. Why the deuce they stopped at thirty-nine always beats me. Old Jowett, when asked to sign them, said : ' Certainly ; forty if you like ! ' Game old cock ! When he carpeted me he said in his squeaky voice : ' Mr Singleton, I regret to tell you that your premature addiction to racing and other games of chance is deemed by the University authorities to be incompatible with your work as a student. You will, therefore, at your earliest convenience, remove yourself beyond our jurisdiction. You will, I trust, settle with the bursar, as we cannot absolutely rely upon being favoured with a remittance hereafter.' ' Sorry, sir,' said I ; ' very jolly here.' ' No doubt, no doubt,' squeaked the little 'un. ' I am far from affirming that a gentleman of means and leisure may not show a certain discriminating devotion to the turf. I advise you, sir, to be very careful. Do not bet beyond your means and do not mortgage your estate. Good afternoon, sir.' "

" Served you right."

" Didn't care a tuppenny damn, Tony. Anyhow, I settled in at the old place and started training a couple of gee-gees. After a while one of the farms became vacant. £700 a year. Along comes a young fellow, well set up, looking me straight in the eye. Wanted the farm. Told him to see the agent. Said he would like to deal with me and would pay his rent in advance. New sensation, Tony. Rent in advance. What ? ' Done with you,' said I. ' Here's my cheque,' said he. ' Have a drink,' said I. ' No, thanks,' said he ; ' don't take it.' A week later in pops Old Vinegar. ' Mr Singleton, I have made the most careful inquiries into the antecedents

of John Humphreys, your new tenant. I deeply regret to inform you that he is a Methodist.' 'He paid his rent in advance,' said I; 'wish there were a few more like him.' 'I deemed it my duty to warn you,' said he. 'Don't mention it,' said I. 'Have a drink.' 'Perhaps a little whisky in soda,' said Old Vinegar. Sure enough, the fellow was a Methodist. Queer thing, Methodism. Spreads like measles. Humphreys collected a few of them and held meetings in the barn. Could hear them roaring their hymns a mile off. Humphreys then applied for the use of the schoolroom. No go; Old Vinegar headed him off. Next he tried to get an empty warehouse belonging to Driver, the grocer. Old Vinegar threatened to withdraw his custom if Driver consented. Driver funked it. Damned if Humphreys didn't come straight to me. 'Squire,' said he, 'some of us don't hold with the Church of England and would like to worship God in our own way and in a chapel of our own.' 'Why the devil shouldn't you?' said I. 'The parson has done us down every time,' said he. 'Damn his eyes,' said I; 'I'll give you a plot of land to build on.' 'Thank you kindly, Squire. It will make us very happy.' 'Right-o!' said I, 'and hanged if I don't give you twenty-five quid to start the building.' In a week or less Old Vinegar rushes through my sacred portals. 'I have just heard, Mr Singleton, that you have presented a plot of land to the Methodists for a chapel, where they will preach their pernicious doctrines.' 'Don't let it worry you,' said I; 'have a drink.' 'Sir,' said he, 'I should be false to my vows and unworthy of my cloth if I did not most strongly protest against

this impious encouragement to schism.' 'Don't know anything about that and care less,' said I. 'Well, sir,' said he, 'on a matter such as this, touching the spiritual welfare of souls committed to my charge, I think you ought to have consulted me.' 'Not at all,' said I; 'not at all. If I choose to give a plot of land to the Mormons, damme, I'll do it. And let me remind you that when your predecessors called on my sainted ancestors they were given dinner in the kitchen.' Had him there, Tony. Gentle hint that it was time to put him in his place. Well, to cut the cackle, in a few weeks back comes Master Humphreys. 'Squire,' says he, 'on the third of next month we lay the foundation-stone. We want you to do it.' 'What'll it cost?' I asked. Humphreys laughed. 'Whatever you choose to give, Squire.' 'I won a thousand last week on Whistling Jock, so damned if I don't give you a hundred.' And, by thunder! Tony, we had the ceremony this afternoon. Gave up a race-meeting for it. Prayers and hymns and yum-yumming. They gave me a silver trowel. Damned if I'm not the most popular man in the county. Thinking of standing as a Liberal. If I do, I'll win in a canter. Take my tip, Tony; keep the parsons in their place. Play you a hundred up."

A serious difficulty that will confront you will be the village stores. Depend upon it, the local tradesman will plunder your employees unless you step in and stop it. You can open a company shop or put some young tradesman into a shop which you control. Both of these methods are dangerous. If it be a company shop, any dissatisfaction reacts in the

works. If it be a young man, the time required in checking and advising him can be much better spent in other directions. On the whole, I advise you to start a co-operative society. The Co-operative Movement is quite safe from your point of view. It is firmly based on the wage-system and is not therefore subversive. Build a lecture-hall for them. Go to some trouble in selecting the lecturers. Choose subjects like astronomy, botany, chemistry, and geology. A wise plan would be to get your private stenographer appointed as lecture secretary. If an 'unsound' lecturer comes, be careful to entertain him yourself. And give him a good time.

Above all, don't play the fool by opposing the Trade Unions. On the contrary, encourage them. Remember two things: that it is better to discuss wages with one representative man than with one hundred individuals; and that with a strong Union in your particular trade you can always calculate to a nicety what your competitors are doing. I need not tell you, in this year of grace, that high wages pay best. I do not doubt that the Trade Unions are destined to grow; that they are the harbingers of a new order of society. So be it! Fight the evitable; yield gracefully to the inevitable.

How now, my budding millionaire!

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

XV: FAITH

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I read with sympathy your last letter, in which you told me that your attendances at chapel are perfunctory and that both the ritual and the sermons leave you cold and unimpressed. You wish it were not so. I am glad that it is so. At your age I felt as you do. And without regret. There are doubtless young men and women who, in their early years, look in upon their souls with fear and consternation. I suspect them to be abnormal. Like Roland in *Aurora Leigh*, they root up the violets to discover the scent. I am content that your soul should grow without introspection. Rest assured (and with this assurance set about the business of life) that you need not seek religion, because, in God's good time, it will find you. It is my experience—take it for what it is worth—that practically all young men of early piety are insufferable prigs.

I do not mean that you should treat lightly any searching questions that go to the roots of your faith and conduct, but rather that you should realize that illumination comes with growth and experience; that only the urgent and imperative questions need be answered in the days of your pupilage. I venture the assertion that very few of these questions call imperatively for an immediate answer. There is a whole universe of thought and emotion between flippancy and priggishness. Flippancy with serious things is a crime; priggish assumption of piety is a disease. There is a passage in Marcus Aurelius which has always lingered in my memory. "To

Rusticus," he says, "I am beholden that I first entered into the conceit that my life wanted some redress and cure." I think that he also thanked Rusticus for warning him against walking about the house in a long robe. (That long robe! A living, but happily retired, proconsul, who mistook ostentation for stateliness and affectation for conduct, insisted upon his wife, even in bed, addressing him as "Your Excellency.") Just as Antoninus remembered gratefully his Rusticus, so I would like you to remember me for telling you the same thing. It is when we realize that life needs redress and cure that we are in the true way of salvation.

Now if you and I do not know the meaning of religion pure and undefiled, who does? How easily and vividly can I recall those early days when your father and I lived in a religious atmosphere so exquisitely simple and confiding that God, so immanent was He, veritably seemed our father's father! We looked up to this God of ours with a spiritual vision undimmed by ritual or dogma. Nor were we disturbed by those rational questions that come to us with diabolical promptitude when we fly from the nest. The morning worship in the breakfast-room, attended by the family, the servants and the visitors (who almost invariably were of our own faith), so coloured our day that, more than thirty years after, more than a quarter of a century since I severed the religious tie (reprobate that I am), I rise from breakfast with a vague sense of some course untasted, some inadequacy, some subtle and fleeting appetite unsatisfied. I remember stray phrases, and even long passages, from your grandfather's

prayers, the rising and falling cadences tinged with a rich Irish brogue. Ah, I hear it ! “ Pluck from us our secret sins ; cleanse our souls from every stain. Open up our providential path ; lead us in the way everlasting. And now, O Lord, as we go our several ways, each to the daily task, lighten our burdens, if it so please Thee. Grant us opportunities in Thy service ; make us worthy of such service, that we may grow in grace and so humbly minister to Thy glory.” Not without an acute sense of isolation I remember an incident of personal interest to you. It was the morning after your mother had accepted your father. The Quaker silence, so concentrated yet so reposeful, that always followed the Bible reading, was broken by your father, who, throwing himself upon his knees, passionately prayed that he might to the very end be a loving and faithful husband, and, if God willed it, a father who would know how to pass on the celestial fire.

I always listen with impatience and some contempt to clever young men who sneer at Puritanism such as this ; I never see a play at a theatre with some mephitic sex-problem (so called) without reflecting that it is but foam thrown up against the rock out of which you and I and a million others were hewn. Make no mistake about it, in essence we who were bred like this are the true aristocrats. For we were conceived in purity, born in love, nurtured in the simplicities of an abiding faith, and finally cultured in a literature sweet and clean as running water.

Yes ; aristocrats, no less. I have met those whom the world calls aristocrats, the bluest of blue-bloods, and never batted an eyelid. Not for nothing

was I bred a Brahmin! My first encounter with a blue-blood—a gentleman of ancient lineage, as *The Times Literary Supplement* would say—happened in a little market town in Leinster. I had gone there after trout. At lunch-time ('luncheon,' as *The Daily Telegraph* would say) I rushed into the coffee-room, very hungry. At the table a revolting sight halted me. Seated there was something in the semblance of a man. His eyes looked vacantly at me, scarcely comprehending my presence. His right arm was paralyzed. With his left hand he ladled soup into his mouth with disastrous results to shirt, waistcoat, and tablecloth. I went out into the hall and called Micky, the general factotum and ma or-domo.

"Micky," said I, "what's that thing ye've got in there?"

"Why, sorr, it's the Earl of Ballydrum."

"A belted earl!" said I.

"A great ould family hereabouts," said Micky.

"It's an idiot," said I.

"Mebbe, sorr, it's oncharitable to call him an idjut. It's like this: he's paralyzed down wan side; he's ippiliptic down the other; he has a thrifle of wather on the brain, and lashin's of liquor on his stummick."

Is it an idle divagation to discuss breeding with religion? I am not sure if they are not the obverse and reverse of the same coin.^a Might we not definitely assert that religion is a vain thing, unless it leads to clean breeding? For how can we be clean bred unless our people lead clean lives? And how can they lead clean lives unless they think clean thoughts?

As we think, so, in the ultimate, do we live. It is the beginning and end of eugenics. Or, to put it in another way, the test of religious truth is found, not in logic, not in casuistry, but in conduct. I know, of course, that the scientific theologian rejects with scorn such an assertion. "What," he cries, "are the petty comings and goings of the individual compared with the eternal verities?" And he is as good as his word. "There are sins and sins," he affirms, "some of great gravity because they touch doctrine, and others, touching only conduct, are venial." Thus, if you hold fast to some central truth, a thousand venial sins may be all forgiven. Apart from the obvious criticism that a central truth that winks at a multitude of venial sins is probably neither central nor true, I would advise you to look closely to your venial sins and let the central truths establish themselves in your mind and heart as and when they will. Look after the pence and the pounds will take care of themselves. To come back to my point, think cleanly and you will live cleanly.

Although I have never fashed myself about theology, on looking back I now see that I could never subordinate reason to faith. St Anselm describes philosophy as *ancilla fidei*. "When we have arrived at Faith," he says, "it is a piece of negligence to stop short of convincing ourselves, by the aid of Thought, of that to which we have given credence." I prefer thought first with credence as the sequel. Why not? But that throws me back on the elementary question: What is thought? It is odd, when you come to think of it, that it is easier to define faith than thought. I shall not attempt to

define them. Why should I? This is only a letter from your old uncle on the shelf. But you might do worse than make it your thesis for M.A. *Mon Dieu!* What a theme! To trace the gradual opening of mankind's eye from the earliest gleams of intelligence; to throw the modern mind, with modern revelations, upon the ancient gropings; to open out history's cerebral system; to weigh, judge, test, and appreciate the concepts of the wise men of the past—Thales of Miletus, Anaximander, Anaximenes, Pythagoras, Heraclitus, Xenophanes, Parmenides, Zeno of Elea, Empedocles, and so down the corridors of time, each with its own peculiar echo; to tell us how and why the thinker and the priest gradually went their different ways.

The point I would urge upon you is that human thought is not yet 'pure'; still awaits its supreme moment of emancipation; has yet to develop new methods and discover new canons. If I tell the theologian that I will not subordinate my freedom of thought to his dogmatic assertions, he can retort upon me that my methods of thought are crude, sectional, limited; that my intellectual horizon is confined to material things. Can I deny, for example, this assertion by Caird: "In all religious experience there are involved feelings and acts which are possible only to spiritual and intellectual beings, which are grounded in certain necessary relations of the human spirit to the Divine, and which, therefore, do not arise accidentally, but in unconscious obedience to the hidden logic of a spiritual process"? What have I to say? Beyond a reservation as to a different concept of the Divine, I can only reply that

the "hidden logic" remains as obscure to the priest as to me; that he is as effectually the prisoner of existing methods of thought as I am. This may be good or bad polemics (bad, I think); it is certainly not particularly helpful. For neither you nor I cared one jot for the victory of dogmatist or rationalist; we want to *know* that our souls may be satisfied.

If you will forgive me, on the ground that I am an amateur, I suggest that we have not as yet the right vocabulary. Is a vocabulary the effect or the cause of thought? The effect, I presume. If, then, we have not a vocabulary subtle and responsive enough to deal with the eternal mysteries, it implies that our thought remains inadequate, "does not rise above those external and accidental relations which belong to the sphere of the finite." Swedenborg, before his conversion, knew this; he affirmed the existence of a knowledge beyond our conscious intelligence, a shy visitant to the "secret and sacred sanctuary" of the subconscious. Croce seems to me to be the only modern thinker who bridges the chasm. He has taught us that speculation in the realm of the spirit is not less 'practical' than an examination of the material; that the one merges into the other.

Now see where I have led you? How do these abstract considerations help you in your struggle to live a sane and fruitful life? If you follow them up, they at least keep you out of mischief. *Parbleu!* But it is clear to me that the practice of religion must be based on some simple yet strong foundation. "This one thing I know" was the triumphant cry of an early disciple. What did he care for logical niceties, for historical proofs, for angels dancing on

the point of a pin? Not a damn! He knew (or thought he knew) something that was hidden from the wise and prudent. It gave him inspiration and driving force. His "one thing" need not be yours; but two questions will come to you: What are you going to do with your life? and Under the *force majeure* of what spirit will you live? A good deed done in a bad spirit were ill done. In these later days we have wrested that beautiful word 'spiritual' from its obscurantist context. In the true sense of the word your life must be tested by its spiritual implications. An ardent devotion to theological or philosophical hair-splitting won't save you.

Do you know, when I started this letter I had no intention of touching theology, even remotely. But I had barely begun before a young Roman *padre*, tired and footsore, came to break bread with me and engage my interest, or at least my goodwill, in a mission on the Estate. Ingenuous boy! Behind him I saw his bishop, a Jesuit, by special dispensation bishop *in partibus*. Behind him I saw the Archbishop of Guatemala, a cunning cleric, grasping at the remnants of temporal power. Behind him I saw the Pope, delicately poising his interests in Austria, in Belgium, his moral weight in the civilized world and his political preoccupations in Italy. Then suddenly I realized that this vast organization must be built up on something, and so my memory wandered back into that thrilling story of endless inquiry into the nature and attributes of God, with the concurrent struggle of Thought to cut loose from triumphant obscurantism. Nor did I forget that your great-grandfather and his father before him

went to jail for bearing their share in the struggle. I recognized in this young priest an agent of a great organization, whose *raison d'être* formally, if not actually, is the assumption of a special knowledge of that "hidden logic"—a knowledge so certain that when proclaimed *ex cathedra* is final and infallible. Then a spasm of jealousy shot through me. What if you, my nephew, were to 'vert? The notion seemed as horrible as a nice girl mating with a vicious man. And that is how I dropped into theology.

I am naturally immensely interested in your thoughts; but I am most deeply concerned about your conduct. So far as thought influences conduct I pray that your thought shall never be paralysed by vague abstractions; that you shall, at least, know "one thing," and, knowing it, jump into the battle, in the fullness of time scaling the flaming ramparts. Conduct is achievement. Take your time, measure the ground, then draw your sword and smite the enemies of the Lord.

But don't wear 'the long robe' in your home circle!

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

XVI: RELIGION

MY DEAR GEORGE,

You seem to be surprised that a man of the world like me should betray any strong feeling upon affairs of the soul in general and orthodoxy in particular. I hope you are not confusing a man of the world with that social pest 'the man about town.' If, by chance, you have done so, you have paid me a poor compliment. The man about town is really a denizen of the underworld, vicious when not vacuous, stupid when not perverted. An odious type. But the man of the world! Suppose some Chinaman (why do we always postulate the Chinaman as belonging to another world?) came over and took the term in the precise meaning of its words, would he not instantly be struck with the positive grandeur of the title? To refuse to have one's brains and feet strapped tight with the thongs of sect or faction; to see with understanding (and, understanding, to forgive or condemn) the world-movements; to travel without arrogance; to read without bias; to meet men and women without prejudice: this were surely no mean status to attain. But it by no means precludes strong feeling and intensity of conviction. For my part, I am not minded to be spewed out of God's mouth for being neither hot nor cold.

It is not despite but because I am a man of the world that I strongly resent any attempted usurpation of my spiritual rights by an outward authority whose sanction is highly disputable. I prefer the guidance of my own inner light. The more I see of life the more am I impressed with the belief that to

follow one's light, to fight for it, and, if needs must, to die for it, is the only justifiable cause for war. I am not even afraid of intolerance. There is a smooth fellow out here whom I am ready to kill. He suffers from excessive tolerance. From stray bits of conversation I can piece together his undistinguished life. Born in a pietistic rather than a religious family, he spent his young days between school and Presbyterian observances. He early acquired a reverence for the Sabbath, with a corresponding disregard for spiritual things. Evidently a rather good-looking boy and conscious of it, I can see him quite early decked out in pretty clothes by an adoring mother, who herself had thoughts of her own bonnet when she ought to have been listening to the sermon. At school, a sedate little sneak. His father puts him to the law, and, in due course, he practises in one of the West Indian islands. It is not difficult to trace the growth of his mind. He soon discovers that the realities of life are foreign to the Sunday seclusion of public worship. Seclusion! Yes; for, although it is public, it is nevertheless secluded from actual life. It is, in its way, amateur theatricals, involving a particular mode of dress and behaviour. I could not imagine this fellow going to church unless all the accessories are forthcoming—a respectable church edifice, a fashionable, if not a popular, preacher, and himself specially dressed for the occasion. Nor would he dream of going unless women went also. To him, worship is a formal affair, like the holding of assize, and barely remote from a decorously conducted garden-party. His emotions are not dissimilar in these varying circumstances—a certain

exaltation, a feeling that all is right, that he too must be right or he wouldn't be there. Gradually there creeps over him a consciousness that he is a morally superior person—that he is in the social and religious swim—social *and* religious ; for he discovers (not being exactly a fool) that his particular social *milieu* makes the church its *rendezvous* and its defence. He feels, rather than realizes, the part played by women. Marriage is an integral part of the game ; it is a social *and* religious factor in the economy of the life lived by his respectable friends. He must marry respectably. Meantime the law brings him into touch with less reputable elements. Divorce, bastardy, indecent assault and similar cases are constant reminders that there is a world outside his pietistic circle. He finds that there are men and women ready to break the sex laws his Church would impose, and, oddly enough, he regards them with a certain envy. At the Club, too, he meets men who laugh at his righteous pretensions. It is curious, too, that these men stand higher in the regard of the community than he does. It is very puzzling.

It is evidently an essential part of religion that one should prosper. To prosper, the fellow finds it prudent to 'keep in' with these worldly men, who decline to be impressed by his apparent piety. So he hints in the proper quarters that he is a veritable Don Juan. His experiences in the law-courts have taught him the sex jargon used by 'men about town,' while various hotel episodes, real or invented, are cited to prove to the heretics that he is no namby-pamby. He fails to learn that decent men never discuss their love affairs. Very soon his amatory

reminiscences are smelt a mile away and he is shunned, because he is a bore rather than a hypocrite. And, I regret to tell you, although his phylacteries are of gentlemanly width, deluded litigants prefer another lawyer, who, frank and honest though he be, plays tennis or goes fishing on Sunday. So the fellow applies for a magistracy in the Colonial Service, and he is fobbed off on us.

Arrived here, he plays the same game. He attends church twice on Sunday, and is soon on a committee or two. Also he has added to his Don Juan *repertoire*. All this does not annoy me ; I am hardly conscious of it, until the local question arises : Shall we play tennis at the Golf Club on Sundays ? Up to now the unco' guid have kept the Club sabbatically sealed. And our hypocritical stipendiary now joins them. Those of us who have had to listen politely to his amatory stories are first surprised, then annoyed, then downright angry.

At this stage he invites himself down to the Estate. On the boat he sidles up to me, says he knows I am a man of the world, and (to cut his hesitating circumlocution short) could I arrange an affair for him during his visit ? I tell him with tolerable directness precisely what I think of him. Is he abashed ? Not he. He replies that no man is thoroughly consistent and that in condemning him for the stand he takes on Sunday tennis, combined with his natural disposition for immorality, I am merely intolerant and do not sufficiently take human nature into account. During his self-invited visit I am cold toward him. He complains of it ; says I am prejudiced against him because of that Sunday tennis dispute ; that

I am the most intolerant man in the West Indies.

I prefer your Quaker grandmother's intolerance to this person's tolerance. About the time you were born I lay in bed with death lurking near. Hot-foot she came to me—her reckless and erring son. When the battle ended in my favour she determined that my days of convalescence should not pass without warnings (given discreetly and in great love) as to my eternal welfare. Very weak I was and glad to lie back in the quiet of my room, the fire flashing images on the ceiling. I can hear her voice, gentle and insinuating: "What shall I read to thee, dear?" I knew that she was 'about her Master's business.' "*Artemus Ward*," said I. "Remember, dear, thou art not yet free from danger. Let it be something less frivolous." "Anything you like," I smiled back. She searched my shelves, finally returning with Lacordaire's *Sermons*. Their charm carried her away. On and on she read, forgetting me. "Who was he?" she asked. "A Catholic priest," I answered. "How very, very dreadful!" she exclaimed. "What would thy father say if he knew?" "Let it be a guilty secret between us," I answered, trying not to laugh—for laughing was painful and dangerous. She put the book down, took off her spectacles, busied herself about the room, and went down to dinner. Afterward she returned and, thinking I was asleep, picked up the forbidden book. After a while I caught her eye. "Naughty!" said I. "Thou'rt quite sure he was a Roman priest?" she asked anxiously. "Well," said I, "he belonged to the Gallic branch." "Ah!" said she, "that

puts a totally different complexion on it." She went on reading. A few weeks later she rose in Quaker meeting and practically recited one of these sermons which she had memorized. Not much given to speech, but rather to deeds (as is every good home-builder), the dear Friends listened to her entranced. "A precious manifestation of the Holy Spirit" was their verdict.

I humbly apologize to my mother's spirit if I have soiled her memory by contrasting it with an amative hypocrite. But perhaps in the contrast we may discover some understanding of a clean religion. I again suggest that what really counts is conduct; beyond that, theology really merges into or is submerged by philosophy. It is in conduct that a proper intolerance expresses itself. Contrary to the general opinion, intolerance may be coloured with humour. And who knows that better than we Irishmen? Down in a little Kerry village there lived, a few years ago, a Catholic priest and an Episcopalian rector. They never feared to fight each other; each was always true to his 'faith,' but in private they were inseparable cronies. One night the rector had eaten dinner and spent the usual pleasant hours at the Catholic vicarage. "It's time to go," he said reluctantly. "Man, ye can't go in this rain; have another tot." So he stayed on. And the rain rained on. "Ye'll just have to share my bed with me," said the priest. So they went upstairs, undressed, and both knelt down to pray, one on each side of the bed. Each prayed on, waiting for the other to rise. Neither would rise before the other. Thus for an hour or more did the praying proceed,

each looking at the other through the tail of his eye. Finally, both fell on the floor, too sleepy and exhausted to continue the contest. And there they slept until the priest's housekeeper discovered them next morning. "Ye'll stay and have breakfast, ye stiff-necked heretic," said the priest. "Indeed and I won't, ye poor deluded child of Babylon; I'm going to take ye along this instant to the Rectory and it's a grand breakfast we'll have." As they walked, the priest suggested that "mebbe" he'd been praying all night by a sick-bed. "Easy for you to tell your flock that, but what would I be doing all night when there's nobody would call for me?" "Sure," said the priest, "didn't I call ye out to witness the dying man's will?" But the priest's housekeeper was garrulous and the story leaked out. Neither priest nor rector was dismayed. When chaffed about it, the priest asked if he was the man to yield in prayer to a Protestant "blagyard." The rector, in his turn, asserted that when it came to praying he wouldn't yield by the tenth of a second to a Papist ruffian.

À propos de rien—I'm writing a letter and not a treatise—I like another priest and rector story, this time from Tipperary. The priest, meeting the rector, remarked: "Ye're not looking your usual cheery self." "Nor feeling it," said the rector. "What's wrong?" asked the priest. "To-morrow week my bishop makes a visitation," answered the rector. "When my bishop comes along," said the priest, "I always give him a chicken, with the bacon done to a turn." "It's a good idea and I'll act on it; but, man dear, that's not the trouble. He'll preach a

sermon and the congregation will be composed of my wife, myself, our three children, the governess, the nurse, and the sexton." "You look after the chicken and I'll attend to the congregation," said the priest. Next morning, being Sunday, the priest addressed his people thus : "Next Sunday, at eleven o'clock, I want every faithful member of my flock to attend the Episcopalian Church across the way. *Anybody disregarding what I say will be liable to ex-communication.*" On the Monday morning after his visitation the Protestant bishop said to the rector : "I must say the size of the congregation was most surprising and gratifying." "I'm glad your lordship's pleased," said the rector.

He'gho ! I'm getting into my anecdotage, when I really intended to write to you about religion. The truth is, I do not know how to put my thoughts into words. I want you to be fundamentally a religious man ; but I know with certainty that the truths, intuitions, and motives that moved my generation will not appeal to yours ; or, at least, will appeal with varying stresses. After all, is not the religious life a fine and delicately balanced form of good taste ? Is it not the sum-total of your spiritual and intellectual beliefs and apperceptions expressing themselves in your life and conversation ? Yes, if you read my meaning into the term 'good taste,' you won't go far wrong, even though we know not, and may never know, any *arbiter elegantiarum* in the realms of the spirit. I have often wondered why Matthew Arnold did not hit upon this idea. Surely he, if anybody, who both saw and felt an 'abiding spirit' behind the blind horrors and insensate cruelties of

the society of his day, might have realized that Church organization, based so largely on sheer casuistry, could be as cruel and unrelenting as the industrial organization which he taught my generation to hate. Yet he joined the Philistines and did his share in hounding Colenso, who, you may remember, bluntly declared against the literal inspiration of the Bible. How very remote do his words read to-day ! “ In writing the story of the Exodus from the ancient legends of his people, the Scripture writer may have had no more consciousness of doing wrong, or of practising historical deception, than Homer had or any of the Roman annalists.” What was Arnold’s criticism of this now universally accepted fact ? “ Theological criticism censures this language as unorthodox, irreverent : literary criticism censures it as false.” This fine critic (what a debt we owe him !) could not see that the religious life was beautified and not injured by intellectual honesty. To Arnold, pure thought must be divorced from the emotional life of religion. He cites Spinoza, who wrote very much what Colenso wrote : “ The Bible contains much that is mere history, and, like all history, sometimes true, sometimes false.” What is Arnold’s comment ? “ We must bear in mind that Spinoza did not promulgate this thesis in immediate connexion with the religious life of his times [he was not such a fool], but as a speculative idea : he uttered it, not as a religious teacher, but as an independent philosopher ; and he left it, as Galileo left his, to filter down gradually (if true) into the common thought of mankind, and to adjust itself, through other agency than his, to their religious life.” Very good ;

this "speculative idea" did "filter down," finally to adjust itself in the mind of Colenso, with dynamic results. Was Arnold glad that the truth had at long last filtered down and adjusted itself? Listen again to him: "The Bishop of Natal does not speak as an independent philosopher, as a pure thinker; if he did and if he spoke with power in this capacity, literary criticism would have no right to condemn him. But he speaks actually and avowedly, as by virtue of his office he was almost inevitably constrained to speak, as a religious teacher to the religious world."

I think I am content to rest my argument (such as it is) upon the implications of this old, far-off, forgotten controversy. It is as true to-day as then that mankind hates to have the basis of its emotions shattered by a bomb charged with palpable truth. But great emotions are only possible when informed with truth, whether it be philosophic, scientific, or historical. I should not like to think, as I passed from your ken, that you had followed Arnold's plan and kept your emotional life carefully untouched by modern truth as though it were an unclean thing. Nevertheless, in my own untutored way, I gather hope, and even inspiration, from the belief that were there any Arnolds living to-day (I know of none) they would see, what they could not see in the mid-Victorian period, that pure thought and pure religion are neither divorced nor quarrelsome.

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

XVII: LOVE AND HOME-BUILDING

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Sitting here solitary, and perhaps a little sentimental (a *malaise* not unknown to men of my age), the memory came to me of that very nice girl whom you brought in to tea a few months ago. You looked to me an attractive couple. I do not think that either of you had 'serious intentions,' as they put it in certain circles; but I shouldn't have objected if you had. Love, like religion, inevitably comes to us, and there is no reason why we should not frankly face what is involved in sex-love. Judging by the vast mass of novels perpetrated in Great Britain and America, it seems as though love-making is the chief preoccupation of the English-speaking races. It all depends upon how we regard love, whether this is good or bad. In the narrow sense of the word—the immediate relations between a man and a woman—I confess it wearies me. Deeply interested though I am in everything you do, for heaven's sake, don't relate to me the endless ins and outs of your courtship. Not only does it fail to interest me, but it is no business of mine. It will probably pique the curiosity of some old maids, but healthy folk are only concerned with the result. The plain issue is whether you are marrying for companionship or to build a home. I mean by companionship the enjoyment of each other's company without a family. You are well within your rights in pursuing this course—it depends on temperament and psychology—but the community is deeply concerned when you present it with a family.

I am willing to wager that, if your wife be healthy in mind and body, she will choose the family. To her, the nest is for her young. Making ample allowance for women with some absorbing vocation—literature, art, religion—the overwhelming majority of women are primarily mothers, and lovers only that they may become mothers. Any mental process that they may experience in this regard is not conscious, but subconscious. They instinctively know that home, and all that is involved in the word, is their heritage and their function. I cannot conceive why so many ‘modern’ women revolt at their destiny. Perhaps it is because industrial and social developments have perverted their energies and rendered them incompetent. Did you see an extraordinary manifesto issued last year by the Fabian women? They proclaimed a propaganda to drive married women out of their homes and positively compel them to work in factories. Childbirth was to be a mere incident in a woman’s life; the great thing was to work for a wage. An odd affair! These foolish virgins belong to a society whose supposed object is to abolish the industrial system. Proceeding apparently on the principle of a hair of the dog that bit them, they seriously proposed thoroughly to industrialize those women whose menfolk are already under the harrow. Probably that was the silliest thing ever written by any of the innumerable groups of ‘advanced’ women. The great event of a woman’s life is contemptuously brushed aside as an ‘incident’; the child is to be bundled off to a *crèche*. I wonder what your mother would have thought of it! I did not see her for a month after

you were born. Your coming nearly killed her, you young rascal ; but ecstasy still shone round her forehead like an aureole. It was as though she had seen God. If the surroundings are squalid, is the event less beautiful, less memorable, to a working man's wife ? I have seen young mothers in every stage of civilization and savagery. Almost without exception, there is a joy in the knowledge of fertility ; but it is revered as a miracle. The Fabian women who wrote such diabolical heresy could not see that industrialism had corroded their own souls, even as it has despoiled their working sisters' bodies. And let me add that unless we learn to reverence childbirth, our course as a great nation is run.

Reverence for childbirth is, however, only the beginning of wisdom. The child must be nurtured and cultured and brought to maturity. Look at us out here. We keep a gang of men constantly cleaning and thinning our coco-nut walk, so that we may bring the coco-nuts to fruition. The overseer is always on the *qui vive* for destructive insects or for overcrowding. Three times every year we clean and prune our thousand acres of bananas. We watch anxiously for disease ; we closely examine the soil lest it grow sour for want of proper draining. Is a child's life less important than vegetables or fruit ? Not less important, but less capable of immediate exploitation for profit. And so we are apt to let it grow up like Topsy. Industrialism suggests that the child can wait for proper attention. Meantime the mills must be kept going. Call out the women ! And, just now, why not the children ? I answer—am I an old fogey ?—that now more than ever ought

the women to throw aside every consideration and become skilled home-builders. They must build as they never built before. The gaps to be filled !

Compute, if you can, the social—the economic—loss suffered by Great Britain, during the past thirty years, by the diversion from their real work of thousands of women who have been stung by the political gadfly. The worst of it is that these women have posed the question falsely. They have said to the men : “ Do you want good and intelligent wives ? ” Of course the men promptly answer in the affirmative, with a mental reservation as to beauty. “ Then vote for ‘ Votes for Women ’ ” comes the irrelevant rejoinder. What the political vote has got to do with domestic competence and feminine intelligence has never yet been disclosed. But the question, put in this form, implies that men who do not fash themselves about the vote are logically indifferent to the domestic virtues. “ Yah ! You want a doll for a wife,” I once heard a suffragette exclaim. The man was generous and refrained from the obvious retort. The true position was put with epigrammatic point some years ago by a friend. “ Man,” said he, “ exploits Nature ; woman exploits man.” He might have added that the child exploits the woman. It is when woman competes with man in exploiting Nature, and claims citizenship on the strength of it, that sensible men politely but firmly tell the women to get back to their proper work. And, if you think of it, the vote has precious little to do with it. For a very simple reason : politics mainly reflects economic conditions. Women have at present no economic standing. When they have

transformed the nation's home life into a great science and art ; when they have made the home truly the Englishman's castle ; when they help men to abolish the wage-system, instead of pushing the men more deeply into its mire (by competing with them for lower wages) ; then, and not before, will they have acquired that economic power that ensures them the vote.

Forgive me ! I really intended writing you an avuncular letter on love-making and home-building, and, instead, here I am, up to my neck in a discussion on the eternal woman question. Drat it ! Do you find me a bore ?

A confession. When I wrote that woman is primarily a mother, although it is a true generalization, I was really thinking of Mary Armstrong. Mary was a well-developed, full-busted negress, living an innocent and useful life in the little settlement of Stann Creek, not far from the Estate. Everybody liked and respected her. She had early learnt to read and write at the Wesleyan Mission, where they also taught her to use the needle, to cut out patterns and make dresses. At about the age of eighteen she 'found religion.' One of a subject race, floundering in mental darkness as black as its skin, some chord in her nature responded to the cry that the meek shall inherit the earth ; that she was blessed when men should revile her and say all manner of evil things about her ; that poor, and neglected by the ruling caste, did she but believe, she would, beyond the grave, see God. The vision of the crucified Christ, emblem of sorrowing humanity (she knew how cruel were those set above her),

lightened her daily burden. So she sang hymns and went on her way rejoicing. Like Theocrite, "Morning, noon and night, praise God," said Mary.

Mary was general domestic factotum for Mariano, a half-caste trader. She cooked the meals, tidied the rooms, and nursed her master's children, three of them 'lawfully begotten' and three of them 'natural.' She was particularly tender to the 'naturals.' Not only were they the youngest, but the minister had once reminded her, when speaking of them: "Inasmuch as ye did it to one of these . . ." She was dutiful to her master, being nearly always at his beck and call. But on one point she was adamant: she would obey her Church and attend regularly all its services: Sunday morning, Sunday school in the afternoon, evening service, a prayer meeting on Wednesday evening, when they would implore 'the Great Jehovah' to fit them for those promised mansions in the skies. I once looked in through the window at one of these prayer meetings. They were all coloured except the minister and his wife. He had been a cotton operative in Lancashire, and, like Mary, had early 'found salvation.' So he became a total abstainer, attended evening classes, 'felt the call to the ministry,' had been sent to a theological seminary, and finally volunteered for the 'foreign field.' His wife had also been a cotton operative, and the marks of it remained. *Petite*, pale, thin to emaciation, colourless eyes, nostrils fine-drawn, anxious lips that disclosed a cheap set of artificial teeth, I saw her, at a sign from her husband, rise from her knees and sit at the harmonium. Thus

it had come about that these two ex-wage-serfs had found communion and joint hope of a glorious hereafter with Mary's subject race. Negroes will not worship without singing, so the prayers were interspersed with hymns. Gradually, they would work themselves into a condition of emotional tenseness, not easily to be distinguished from inebriation. Mary would walk home with nerves tingling, her body shaken with vague longings. She felt that her own life was inadequate, incomplete. Something within her called for the fulfilment of her destiny.

Mariano gave Mary her food and paid her eight gold dollars a month. Out of her early savings she had bought a sewing-machine, and in her spare moments she made not only her own clothes, but dresses for other women and pyjamas and undergarments for the men. Very often, when delivering these, her men customers would make lewd jokes. They made her feel uncomfortable, but in no wise disturbed her. She would take her money and go. Sometimes she would tell the minister's wife, upon whom these jokes had a strange effect. Tears would come, with enticing memories of Stalybridge. In time, Mary had saved about one hundred and fifty dollars, which the minister kept for her in his safe. Then came Mary's deluge. Her father died, leaving her another hundred dollars, two sailing dorys, and a plot of building land. The minister managed the business for her, and, after taking stock and counting the money in the safe, told her she was worth four hundred dollars. That was the beginning of the deluge. Then Mary made her long-deferred discovery. Coming back from the prayer meeting, in

a mood of exaltation, she found one of Mariano's children swinging in a hammock, delirious with fever. She lifted the child, hugged it, bathed its forehead with bay rum, crooned over it, finally soothing it to sleep with a lullaby that seemed to trail off into a slowly intoned anthem. Then, quite suddenly, Mary became jealous of the morrow, for the child would be well again and she would not be able to hug it warm and close. She now knew that she wanted a child of her own, suckling at her breast.

Fate plays cruel tricks with simple-hearted women. Alonzo Perez came up from Punta Gorda on a visit. Sly, voluble, experienced with women, and, in consequence, persuasive, he quickly discovered how desirable Mary was. So he went with her to chapel, kept near to her, told her of his little plantain patch, with the cottage that needed raising and a floor put in, told her of a little coco-nut walk that two hundred dollars would buy, with sighs complained of his loneliness and how he wanted a wife and family. The courtship is easy; Mary's wishes chime with Alonzo's; she falls into his arms. They agree to proceed to Belize in a month; to be married there; to buy certain furniture and complete the purchase of the coco-nut walk at the lawyer's. Then Alonzo returns south to Punta Gorda and Mary's sewing-machine and needle are kept feverishly busy.

The day appointed draws close. Mary has already bought her wedding-ring. She has a long gold chain. She passes it through the ring and attaches it to her leather purse containing her money. She bids good-bye to Mariano's children, the minister gives her a

Bible, his wife gives her a silk kerchief, Mariano (rather ungraciously) five dollars. With the chain firmly clasped at the back of her neck, the ring and purse, as she fondly imagines, safe, Mary steps into the dory and is rowed out to the schooner *El Armo*, which awaits impatiently beyond the bar. Other passengers are already aboard (the fare is fifty cents) ; only Mary and Mordecai Taylor, a negro who also attends the Wesleyan Chapel, with his inseparable concertina, remain. They get aboard ; there is a rustling of ropes ; the anchor chain clangs round the winch ; the sails are hoisted, mains'l, fores'l, finally jib and flying jib. The water swishes past, the boat gracefully yields to the breeze, Stann Creek sinks away into a blue haze. Mordecai notices that the captain and his three ' boys ' are stupid with drink. But he fears nothing, for it is a fair wind. His fingers idle over the keys of his concertina. Then he plays a tune, half apologetically. Mary, seated beside him, taps her feet, keeping time ; Mordecai, with growing confidence, plays louder ; dark faces look round, nodding their pleasure. Trained to hymn-singing from childhood, the negroes know instinctively every ' appropriate ' hymn. We are on the water ; let us sing something with water in it. Come, Mary, what shall we sing ? She thinks for a moment, then, *piano* :

" Jesu, Lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the gathering waters roll,
While the tempest still is high."

Mordecai's concertina catches her up, giving tone and

body, as Mary, now full-chested, sings as though at the prayer meeting :

“ Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life be past :
Safe into the haven guide,
O receive my soul at last ! ”

The others crowd round the concertina and join in, the men improvising the bass. For two hours they sing their hymns and songs. The wind veers a trifle uncertainly. The sails flap. Mordecai feels uneasy. About a mile to the stern he sees a yawl-rigged boat coming up quickly. He nudges Mary and points it out. It is surely the *Gull Wing* from Punta Gorda. Mary laughs and wonders whether she or Alonzo will reach Belize first. But while the *El Armo's* sails flap and the boat loses pace, the *Gull Wing* tacks out to the east. Mordecai looks anxiously at the captain, who, seated in the stern, handles the tiller absent-mindedly.

It is five o'clock ; the sun ought to be splashing its gold over the tops of the Manatee Mountains. There is no sun visible. A chill creeps over the lightly clad passengers, who shiver, and, ceasing their singing, lapse into churlish silence. Cheer up ! At this time of the year nothing ever happens.

The next few minutes seem ominous to the super-sensitive Mordecai. The boat no longer travels ; it buckets about in the waves. What is wrong ? Look ! From the north-east the clouds scurry as though bent on some urgent errand. They seem to be carrying a message for somebody on board. Look ! From the north-west the clouds are scudding with

desperate haste. They too would seem to have the boat in view. Look! From the east the white horses are galloping, spurred by impatient riders. Look! From the west the waves rise and fall in uneven undulations, like white-turbaned Cossacks careering over the steppes. Look! The captain, gin-sodden, is in mental hypnosis, tongue-tied and helpless. He vacuously moves the tiller of an unresponsive rudder. Look! His 'boys' lie in drunken stupor on the poop. The clouds converge; soon the boat will be churned in waves that clash for mastery. There is a fateful silence in the air; there is, for a brief moment, an uncanny stability on the boat. Passengers and crew sit mesmerized. Then the warring winds and waves meet. It is a whirlwind—a monstrous aerial maelstrom. Mordecai's concertina drops disconsolate on the deck. Mary grasps his arm. A child cries out piteously. Sails continuously flap; the cordage whistles and rustles. The waves, in fury, leap over both decks. From the shore comes a long measured moan—the fabled funeral keen of giants. Then a cloud opens and a great black hand is thrust down out of the heavens. It seizes the boat as if it were a toy. The sails are ripped to shreds; the mainmast creaks, cracks, and drops overboard, not free from the ship but held to it by ropes, as a severed limb remains attached to the body by bleeding ligatures. Quicker than I can tell it, the remorseless black hand pushes the boat down into the sea. The waters rush into cabin and hold. The foremast signals a miserable farewell and disappears. The great black hand dissipates itself into dark puffs of moisture, vaporizing like

Mephistopheles to a ribald and snarling chorus. The north-easter has conquered ; it sweeps victoriously over the wreckage.

With mains'l down, its jib and sterns'l close-hauled, the *Gull Wing* rushes up in a spanking breeze. Two or three heads bob up and down, one or two dory paddles and bits of clothing float near the scene of the wreck. Three men lie flat on the deck, edge themselves over, their left wrists held firmly by the heavier men, ready with their right hands to haul up any possible victim. Alonzo, being light and agile, hangs well over. He can just get his hand and forearm into the water. Suddenly a woman's woolly head comes to the surface. He grabs at it. It is just out of his reach. His fingers touch the crown of the head and slip down to the nape of the neck. He feels the woman's slippery skin. He sees something sparkle. He makes a final effort. Useless ! All that happens is that the sparkling thing, in some strange way, curls round his finger. The boat with slow motion draws him away. The chain, for such it is, is drawn with him. The woman's head, with a horrible and sickening jerk, is dragged down for ever. For an instant the chain lingers round her chin. The head shoots backward and the chain is released.

They pull Alonzo back into the boat. For a moment he is dazed and breathless. Then he looks at the chain still curled round his forefinger. He turns pale, gasping : " My God ! My God ! " He looks vacantly at the chain, to which are secured the wedding-ring and the purse. " God Almighty ! Look ! It is Mary's ! " He sits on the cabin-poop,

ejaculating strange oaths. They ply him with rum ; in their untutored way they sympathize with him.

For the next four hours, while they tacked and beat against a half head-wind, Alonzo sits alone. He runs his hands down his legs to his knees ; he chuckles and jibbers, sometimes breaking out into a screeching laugh. His mates think that the event has rendered him hysterical. At length they make the wharf at Belize. "Never mind, Alonzo, my lad," says the captain kindly ; "it will come out right in the long run." "It sure will," chuckles Alonzo ; "yes, man, it sure will. I didn't want Mary ; I wanted her money. Nita is the girl for me. By God ! I've got Mary's money and I can have Nita without marrying her. Ha, ha ! Ha, ha, ha !" He stuffed the chain and purse into his pocket, shouldered his 'patkey,' and strode down the gang-plank. As he turned out of sight into the dimly lit entrance those on board heard a sound like the shrieking laugh of a wounded hyena escaped from a snare.

If you ask me what has this story to do with love and home-building, I can only reply that I'm hanged if I know. But you shall not escape me ! Next mail will bring you a fat epistle more germane to the subject.

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

XVIII: THE CHILD

MY DEAR GEORGE,

In the business of home-building I am old-fashioned enough to believe, eugenists and cynics notwithstanding (eugenists are unconscious cynics), that love is the foundation. I hope that modern neurotic literature has left you untouched, that you are not tempted to experiment with love as you would with your vegetable garden, but rather that you would let your instincts have at least as much free play as you would your imagination. Just as you discipline your imagination, however, thereby strengthening and refining it, so too there comes a certain spiritual refining of love, inevitable in your culture and attitude. I suppose this is what the Apostle meant when he urged his people not to be unequally yoked together. Of course, you or anybody else may make a mistake. If so, I can see no reason why you should perpetuate it at the behest of the priests, who, in marital affairs, are a danger and a pest. I have a strong prejudice, too, against the modern habit of obtruding one's sexual difficulties and experiences upon others. Blessed is the domestic union that has no public history. When I was leaving the parental roof-tree your grandfather's advice was simple and direct: "My son," said he, "give not thy strength unto women." He meant it, I think, in a narrow moral sense; but it is capable of a wisely wide interpretation. It may mean (and it is my advice to you): Do not let your sexual life divert or impede you in the business of life. I do not really care greatly whether you are ridiculously

happy or reasonably unhappy in your relations with women so long as you steadily pursue your work and compass your career and ambitions. We must recognize, to be sure, that, should your domestic ship be driven on the rocks, a morbid public curiosity may drown you. Parnell, for example: I happen to know that his private life was clean. I think that Granville Barker must have had him in mind when writing *Waste*. Personally, I know the charm of women; every healthy man does; but if the work of the world is to be carried on with verve and intelligence, the sexes must have their several functions. Woman's function is home-building. It is significant that the science and art of home life have receded into the background during these years when the female suffragist and male suffragette have been on the rampage. Please don't assume that I would go back to the stuffy interiors of the Victorian period. We want the windows of home life thrown open. I like Whitman's picture of a great city where the women walk in and out of the procession with the men. But see to it that it be a procession to the parks and not into the factories.

I wonder how many of your generation really know anything about the making of a serenely ordered home life—the skill and training needful, the science of food, the consummate art to evoke a sweet and stimulating atmosphere; the quick and appreciative understanding of the aptitudes and foibles of each individual member of the household, by no means forgetting the servants, for domestic service ought to be a vital part of our national economy. Ought to be, but isn't; and, because it isn't, women are not

yet citizens. Prior to the war we witnessed a curious phenomenon : a considerable group of women, with a far-echoing Press *claque*, backed by sweaters and Fabians, attempted a raid upon every department of men's work. In effect, they contended that home work was so negligible that they could take it in their hobbled stride, and, at the same time, work for wages in factories. They did not care a straw that they were reducing the standard of life. Indeed, they gloried in it ; the Fabian women published a manifesto in which they proved that woman works for less wages than man, and, in addition, is a disgraceful slacker when it comes to joining the union that, at desperate odds, maintains wages. During this period there has been an unparalleled hunger among working men for the sustenance of home-life. An American novelist—Owen Wister—has been drawing some comparisons. He was in Germany just before the war broke out. He saw something of Germany's home life, of its serenity, of the physical and moral strength it gave to the Fatherland. It's a bore, but let me transcribe some of his impressions : “ All of us were going about the country, among the gardens and the farms, or across the plain through the fruit-trees to little Freidberg on its hill—an old castle, a steep village, a clean Teutonic gem, dropped perfect out of the Middle Ages into the present, yet perfectly keeping up with the present. Many of the peasants in the plain, men and women, were of those who brought their flowers and produce to sell in Nauheim—humble people, poor in what you call worldly goods, but seemingly very few of them poor in the great essential possession. . . . Ten or twelve of us

were acquaintances at home ; every one had been struck with the contentment in the German face. Contentment ! Among the old and young of both sexes this was the dominating note, the great essential possession. The question arose : What is the best sign that a Government is doing well by its people—is agreeing with its people, so to speak ? None of us were quite so sure as we used to be that our native formula, ‘ Of the people, by the people, for the people,’ is the universal ultimate truth.”

With one disquieting exception, he notes a massive Teutonic polyphony of well-being. He falls in love with Frankfurt-am-Main. It is “ beautifully governed.” “ These burghers, these Frankfurters, seemed to be going about their business with a sort of solid yet placid energy, well and deliberately aimed, that would hit the mark at once without wasting powder. It was very different and very superior to the ill-arranged and hectic haste of New York and Chicago ; here nobody seemed driven as though by invisible furies—the German business-mind was not out of breath.” I need not quote all his eulogies ; here is his conclusion : “ Such was the splendour of this empire as it unrolled before me through May and June, 1914, that by contrast the state of its two great neighbours, France and England, seemed distressing and unenviable. Paris was shabby and incoherent ; London full of unrest. Instead of Germany’s order, confusion prevailed in France ; instead of Germany’s placidity, disturbance prevailed in England ; and in both France and England incompetence seemed the chief note. The French face, alike in city or country, was too often a face of worried sadness or revolt ;

men spoke of political scandals and dissensions petty and unpatriotic in spirit, and a political trial, revealing depths of every sort of baseness and dishonour [observe that it centred round a woman] filled the papers ; while in England, besides discord of suffrage and discord of labour, civil war seemed so imminent that no one would have been surprised to hear of it any day." That there is enough superficial thinking here to vitiate the main argument is obvious ; but, when I come to think of it and compare my own impressions of Germany with this writer's, I think that German home-building accounts for much.

Now for that disquieting exception. On his way to Frankfurt he is delighted with the courtesy and charm of the passengers, except those who are coming from or going to Berlin. These are of a " heavy, impenetrable rudeness—quite another breed from the kindly Hessians of Frankfurt." Please remember that. It seems irrelevant ; it is very much to the point. Mr Wister's words are these : " A single little sharp discord vibrated through all this German harmony one day when I learned that in the Empire *more children committed suicide than in any other country.*" I am left wondering why this should be a 'little' discord. It is unspeakably dreadful to me. But let our observer tell his own story. At Frankfurt they are celebrating Gluck's centennial. In the midst of it they remember the children, these kindly Hessians. So they stage an old opera, tuneful, full of boisterous, innocent comedy and simple sentiment, for the youngsters. " Children by threes and fours, and in little groups, were streaming from every quarter, entering every door, tripping

up the wide, handsome stairs, filling all the seats—boys and girls ; it was like the Pied Piper of Hamelin. . . . The enthusiasm and the attention of these boys and girls, with their clapping of hands and their laughter, soon affected the spirits of the singers as a radiant day in spring affected me. I envied the happy parents who had their children round them ; it was like some sort of wonderful April light.” That hardly sounds like suicide ; but I must hasten to the sequel : “ It was on the seventh day of June, 1914, that Frankfurt assembled her school-children in the opera-house, to further their taste and understanding of Germany’s supreme national art. Exactly eleven months later, on May 7, 1915, a German torpedo sank the *Lusitania* ; and the cities of the Rhine celebrated this also for their school-children.” Mr Wister sees a moral catastrophe : “ In that holiday we see the feast of Kultur, the Teutonic climax. How came it to pass ? Is it the same Germany who gave these two holidays to her school-children ? The opera in Frankfurt, and this orgy of barbaric blood-lust, guttural with the deep basses of the fathers and shrill with the trebles of their young ? Their young, to whom they teach one day the gentle melodies of Lortzing, and to exult in world-assassination on another ? ”

Have we here no explanation of those child suicides ? I think so. The Prussian machine, with “ heavy, impenetrable rudeness,” has reached out and grabbed those children ; with an eye on future gun-fodder, it has bashed and battered and bent their little brains to its purpose. *And the docile German mothers have not been strong enough to resist.*

Every good mother has something of the tigress in her nature, particularly where her offspring are concerned. The Prussian hand has brushed away the unseen but real frontier, that spiritual web that divides the child's world from ours ; it has dragged the child mind into premature touch with our adult realities ; it has put pen and pencil into a child's hands that itched for toys, and destroyed the rapt imagination that surrounds a child, at once its defence and its incense ; yet these German women have not instinctively seized their young, holding them back from the grim mechanism ; they have not even indignantly protested. Thus it has come about that the German child, its head throbbing when its legs should have been dancing, has gone into a corner, like a wounded animal, and killed itself.

There is, then, an aspect of home-building not lightly to be disregarded—the care and nurture of the child. I affirm that those who have ears to hear and eyes to see will agree that a child's mind is God's most exquisite creation. I remember, about the time that you were born, giving a lecture on education. A school teacher came to me afterward to say that I had overlooked one important factor. "What was it ?" I asked. "The innate cussedness of the English schoolboy," came the prompt reply. Perhaps I had ; but now, in maturer years, I wonder whether that innate cussedness isn't one of our greatest possessions. I have repeatedly noticed that the boy's refusal to assimilate certain kinds of knowledge is precisely the same instinct that warns a monkey against poison. More ! During the past quarter of a century I have observed, with pleasure

and amusement, that our educational system is gradually yielding to that "innate cussedness"; is consciously or unconsciously, avoiding the Prussian method of breaking it to pieces "with heavy, impenetrable rudeness." The result is that the little beggar more or less goes merrily his own way, does not lose his spirit and abandon, retains his sense of humour, and assuredly does not commit suicide.

I grant you that this is only one side of the shield. Do not think that I am blind to other aspects, many of them grave and sinister. But the end we seek is not to be achieved by the Prussian method of indoctrinating and enforcing unquestioned obedience and docility. Least of all do we want docile mothers, who, without protest, send their children first into a mechanized *crèche*, next into a mechanized school, and finally into a mechanized industrial life. How can they prevent it? By themselves graduating into an altogether higher degree of home-building, so that they shall know without doubt or hesitance when home life is better and richer than school life. If prison life were made more attractive than civil life many of us might conceivably drop in. Our schools are worked on this principle; they coax the children to come in. There is nothing to brag about in this. Is it not, indeed, a tragedy of sorts that our school system depends upon outbidding our homes? Hardly a tragedy; a tragi-comedy; for if our home standards outbid the school standards, the schools, in their turn, must inevitably continue the competition. Behind the whole argument remains the ultimate fact that a nation whose mothers cannot

protect their children cannot survive. Docile mothers are at a discount. Let us have a touch of the tigress. I should like a deputation of English mothers to corral the Fabian women's group and soundly box their ears. The sound would reverberate farther than Jenny Geddes's flying stool.

Do you remember your old playmate, Doreen Bertram? She has grown tall and lithe and beautiful. You might do worse, you know! When she was a child, on a day I chanced to be dining there, she rushed into the drawing-room, her eyes dancing with excitement. "Mummy," she cried, "I was out on the common and I saw a poor old soldier. He had only one leg and his breast was covered with medals. He was so tired. So I took him by the hand and I helped him upstairs and told him to lie on my bed and rest." "That was very sweet of you," said her mother; "and did you give him anything to eat?" "Oh, yes; milk and cake and pickles; I got them from Nanny." "And when he had rested did you help him downstairs again?" "No, poor man; he died." At dinner we discussed the child's story. An old maid, who had specialized on education, took a severe view of it, denounced it as rank falsehood and thought the child should be punished. "Not a bit of it," said the mother; "the whole story was very real to Doreen. I wish I could go back to the days when it would have been real to me." "But she knew it wasn't true," replied Miss Prunes and Prisms. "I'm not so sure," said the mother; "a child knows that its doll is stuffed with sawdust—it may even see the sawdust falling out—yet it fondly imagines it to be a living

baby. I wouldn't destroy the illusion for anything you could give me." I think we all envied the little girl her mother !

Here, in the great solitudes, I vaguely remember those educational controversies that shaped my own and my generation's mind. They have left but little impression. Most vividly do I remember Jules Guyau, a French writer whose name seems to be forgotten. Like the Germans, he knew the value of music as an educative factor, but the point he most strongly emphasized was the regenerative quality of suggestion. Suggest to a child that it is naughty ; it *ipso facto* becomes so. Suggest, and keep on suggesting, that it is capable of good and noble things ; the miracle will surely be accomplished. *Ay di mi !* It's a long time ago ! Is it a whimsical theory ? Even if I am a back number, I still believe in it.

I set out to advise you about love and home-building and I have divagated into the subtleties of child life. Never mind ; I'm coming to it ! Have I been deadily dull—a veritable bore of a fusty and musty uncle ? Forgive me. I was led into it by the thought of those German child suicides. In the whole gamut of human experience, is there anything more genuinely terrible than a little child, hustled and bustled by damned Prussianized pedagogues, taking its own life ? Perhaps the most bitter memory of Germany will be, not the bullets we have shot into the quivering flesh of her docile sons, but the ideas she has driven into us—particularly of what to avoid.

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

XIX: MARRIAGE

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Home-building demands continuity of life, which in its turn demands continuity of sustenance. You have often heard me swear roundly at the present capitalist system (even though I may be myself a capitalist). My main objection to it is that it fails to give that continuity of sustenance that is essential to sane and secure home-building. Capitalism is the most destructive domestic pest known to history. War may destroy its thousands, pestilence its tens of thousands, but capitalism destroys millions of homes, and, in the process, boasts of its civilizing mission. It also boasts of its vast aggregations of wealth. Great Britain, France, Germany, America, all are held up to our admiring gaze because of their astounding progress in the production and accumulation of wealth. But we can only accept it if and when the vast majority of our people live near the average line of national income. If I own a business, employing, say, five hundred men, I may accumulate a million sterling in time, plus the value of my plant and goodwill. The statistician comes along, tots it all up, and proceeds to inform an admiring world that here is a prosperous community. For in the bank is a million sterling, while the plant is worth half a million. This yields, says our statistician, an average wealth of £1,500,000 divided by 501—a fraction under £3000 *per capita*. It is mischievous nonsense, of course, but actually passes muster. Assuming my capital yields five per cent., my annual income is £75,000. Assuming that I pay

my workmen an average of £70 a year, their total is £70 multiplied by 500 = £35,000. Our statistician clumps the two figures together, £75,000 plus £35,000 = £110,000 — and divides it by 501. "Splendid!" he exclaims, "the average income of this thriving community is a fraction under £220 a year." This statistical trick invariably imposes upon the credulous public, and particularly upon the Labour leaders, who rub their hands with invisible soap as they solemnly ponder it. If the great bulk of Englishmen are serious about their home-building they will see to it that this is a real and not a statistical average. The only way known to me to do it is to adopt some modern form of guild organization.

The humiliating condition of affairs in Great Britain, and indeed in all the industrial countries alike, whereby secure home-building is rendered a dream to the great majority, has naturally its reaction among the wealthy, who in conscious contrast invest the home with a dignity and sanctity that often passes the bounds of sanity and not seldom strains our sense of humour. The secure home gradually develops into 'the family,' a sacred institution into which you cannot enter unless your resources tend to strengthen it. If one of 'the family' disregards this rule, he or she marries 'beneath them.' This family spirit is by no means confined to the recognized aristocrat; it obtains, if it does not actually prevail, in our established middle-class families. The 'industrious apprentice' is now gently but firmly excluded. I wish we had another Hogarth to show us the new order. To these 'families' marriage is, of course, a *sine qua*

non. If not the corner-stone, it is an essential part of their social edifice. But when I write of 'home-building' I have no thought of such artificial arrangements. In my sense of the term, the legal form of marriage may or may not play a part. Some of the happiest homes known to me are 'free unions.' I have travelled too far and seen too much to entertain any prejudice for or against legal marriage. The ultimate sanction of marriage will be found, not in the claims of the Church, but in the facilities for divorce. I never quite grasped the truth of this until I came out here, where we have no divorce, and, in consequence, very little marriage. Old Alberto Martinez is a case in point.

This mild old ruffian brings back to the Estate every year, and sometimes twice a year, a new woman. I passed a few days ago and saw him sitting on a stool at the door of his cottage, while the latest arrival was cooking his evening meal.

"Well, Alberto, I see you have got another woman."

"Yes, sah; last woman went off Jamaica boy."

"Don't they like you, Alberto?"

"Sometimes they like me; sometimes I like them; nevah know till I try, sah."

"Why don't you marry and be done with it?"

"What, sah, me marry? No, sah."

"Why not?"

"Well, sah, this way. If I marry woman, we live together one year. Then she go off with 'nother man; I go off 'nother woman. After second year, I take 'nother woman; she take 'nother man. By

an' by, when she old and ogly, she come back to me. She say, 'I your lawful wife; now you keep me!' I say, 'You go to hell, you bitch.' She say, 'Ho, ho! You talk me like that, me your wife proper. I go to judge; he give me paper; I get much your money.' No, sah, me not marry."

"You did marry once, eh?"

"Yes, sah. She bad woman."

"Police were after you, Alberto?"

"Police, they find nawting, sah."

"Tell me about it."

"After I marry, we live 'mongst coco-nuts. I very good with coco-nuts. She say me one day: 'You draw ten dollahs from Boss yesday.' I say: 'Whatfor now?' She say: 'Give me five dollahs.' I say: 'Why you want five dollahs?' She say: 'I know where buy five hens and one big roostah.' I think very hard. I say myself (she not hear me) if I get fowl-run, I marry two wives, she and fowl-run. Then Boss he happen long; he say: 'Hello, Alberto, you got fowl-run. Now you stay here long time; you fixed; you can't run away; you take one dollah less wage.' So I say to her: 'I not want any fowls; think I move Point Placentia.' She say: 'Foh Gawd, you dam mean; you want stick yoh money always in yoh pocket; you give me nawting, me yoh wife, you give me nawting.' I tell her she not onderstan'. Then she rampage roun' most onruly. By and by she grab my machete. I get 'fraid, so I grab her by her throat. She gurgle a bit, then drop machete. I pick it up quick. She then get 'fraid, like me. She run out. I not want her run 'way, so I run after to say: 'Come back; I

not hurt you.' She think I run after her to kill her. No, sah; me not like that. Me not kill."

"What then, Alberto?"

"She run quick into bush. Devil there. He grab her tight, so she not able cry out loud. Nevah see her moah, sah."

"Did the police believe about the devil, eh?"

"I nevah tell them that, sah. They stupid; they not onderstand."

"Ever find the body, Alberto?"

"No, sah. Devil, he sure took it."

Please do not think that Alberto is typical. On the whole, our men and women live pretty decently. They exchange partners more frequently than would be approved in high ecclesiastical circles; but they treat their children with the greatest kindness. Sometimes, in their primitive way, they live with marked dignity and self-respect. Only yesterday John Pratt came to me to ask for his money.

"What's the matter, John?"

"Wife sick, sah."

"Not bad, I hope."

"Not too bad, sah."

"Why not stay here and earn money for her?"

"Can't sleep thinking of her."

"Shucks! John. Wives are cheap. Why not poison her and get another?"

"If she die, I die too, sah," he replied, quite simply and sincerely. Long may his lady-love wave, in all her ebon beauty, but let her not cast predatory glances at my poultry.

The instinct of the upper and middle classes for security in home-building is sane and wholesome,

even though 'property' may loom up out of true perspective. Meredith invests home-building with dignity, even with pomp and circumstance. It is the central fact in his scheme of life. Casual or haphazard mating he treats with contempt ; no good comes of it. If he had lived long enough to see you courting, he would not have been content until he had placed you in a great country house, a gem set upon some graceful slope, in a ceinture of birch and fir, with water running through orchards and rich fields and so passing into the distance, a stream of light radiating through deep-toned verdure. You would be a gallant knight, however modern your dress and habits ; your consort—she must be nothing less—would be trained by birth and circumstance to guard the sanctities and amenities of your home, doubtless loving you, but loving your position in the county too ; not out of snobbery, but because she sees it all as a very perfect *châtelaine*, whose dream-children are crowned with a vision of immaculate conception. He avoids tawdry romance, because he is a great critic ; he achieves beauty, because he is a great artist, both in execution and in ideas that crystallize in the crucible of his finely disciplined imagination. Do you know—a confession ! —that I, your commonplace and presumptuous old uncle, sometimes paint you in Meredithian terms ?

“The dinner ended with a brilliant *riposte* by St John Adair, who had been cynically silent during those significant periods that mark social epochs in our county histories, tortuously engendered by a judgment of a daring and subtlety, acquired two generations earlier from the French *émigrés* of that

black Plutonian night, when gossamer wear was torn in deathly fragments by blind and enraged Demos. Rosamond Mortimer had watched the handsome Adair with a distant semblance of the fascination wrought with dæmonic effect by serpent upon dove. There reposed within him, in lazy or contemptuous reserve, dialectical dynamite of high repercussive power. Sir James Swinnerton, the bucolic Member for the Division, heavy and portentous, of vast weight in the Councils of the Party ('a log showing the drift of enthroned vacuity,' the Chancellor had wittily described him), had once or twice looked at St John, with polite and puzzled inquiry, the gape of a tourist who comes unexpectedly upon a Sphinx, half hidden by mahogany and *recherché* napery, the final altar of the *cordon bleu*. Rosamond had nearly determined to warn Sir James that 'Danger' was inscribed by the gods upon Adair's heart, like 'Verboten' on the heart of a German, when Sir Fortescue Mortimer gave her the signal. She led out Lady Dalrymple. George Farley noted that the maid's silver beauty (soon with the alchemy of approved love to be toned into gold) sicklied the dame of fashion.

"The time traditionally allotted to nuts and wine (for a recondite reason, soon to be disclosed. Sir Fortescue, with ritual solemn and befitting, had tabled some of his precious 1821 port, taken from his inner cellar—the comic muse writes sanctuary) having lapsed, Colonel Desmond strolled out into the great hall, encountering Mrs Rutland. He waved his hand round the antlered walls.

" 'Austere, don't you think?' he queried.

“ ‘ Masculine rather than austere. Lady Mortimer went from us too soon to redress the balance. I gain the impression that it marks a three-quarter bachelor.’ ”

“ ‘ It’s a distinction that credits a ripened observation,’ said the Colonel, his mellifluous Hibernicisms robbing the remark of sting.

“ ‘ One may be an accurate observer and yet a bad judge,’ replied Mrs Rutland ; ‘ but your remark struck a deep feminine chord. Ever since we women wore bangles, we have instinctively sensed the difference between the masculine and the austere.’ ”

“ ‘ But, ma’am, there’s an angel in the house.’ ”

“ ‘ A daughter, not a wife. There’s an abyss between father and daughter bridged only by a slender cord of love.’ ”

“ ‘ A thread or two of mutual confidence, let us hope.’ ”

“ ‘ Confidence is an uncertain modicum. Beware of the caressing confidence of a daughter about to deceive.’ ”

“ ‘ Then a daughter cannot express herself in her father’s house ? ’ ”

“ ‘ It would be an aberration of the life-force. She thinks, let us hope, of self-expression in her husband’s home.’ ”

“ ‘ By the pricking of my thumb,’ said the Colonel, ‘ the dream will soon be realized.’ ”

“ Mrs Rutland could purr, but she had claws. ‘ What did you say, Colonel, about a ripened observation ? ’ ”

“ ‘ Ah, ma’am,’ rejoined the Colonel, ‘ yours is in your head ; mine’s only at the tips of my fingers.’ ”

“ ‘Certainly,’ said Mrs Rutland, ‘no dinner is complete without an Irishman. Let us go into the drawing-room and listen to the big guns booming.’

“ ‘In the drawing-room Sir James Swinnerton was recounting, *ore rotundo* and swelled with importance, the exciting crisis of Arthur Balfour’s resignation. ‘Yes,’ he was saying, ‘Arthur has gone and we have put Bonar Law in his place.’

“ ‘Hail to the *tertium quid*!’ cried Adair, with mock enthusiasm.

“ ‘*Facilis descensus pecuniæ*,’ said Sir Fortescue.

“ ‘Do you mean money or sheep?’ asked Desmond.

“ ‘The golden calf,’ suggested Adair.

“ ‘It’s a new shrine for old knees to bend at,’ said Sir Fortescue, conscious that a shrewd blow had been dealt at his order and the ancient ways.

“ ‘When your country calls, you will enter the Temple of Rimmon,’ came Adair’s smoothly suave comment.

“ ‘If you drop in casually, you needn’t abjure your faith,’ soothed Desmond.

“ ‘He had to go,’ continued Sir James. ‘There’s a new force in politics; ’twas Bonar Law or the triumph of Manchester.’

“ ‘There’s a considerable Irish population both in Manchester and Glasgow,’ remarked Desmond.

“ ‘It’s the triumph of bad taste,’ said Lady Dalrymple. ‘Arthur was fastidious. He bent down over the skein and insisted upon drawing out the perfectly correct shade.’

“ ‘If you want shades in politics, dear lady,’ rattled Sir Fortescue, ‘we must not give you the vote. There are only two colours, white for our

party, black for the Radical rascals.' He looked with arch aplomb at Adair.

" 'It disturbs me that our statesmen are colour-blind,' laughed Mrs Rutland.

" 'White and black are not colours,' said Adair, 'but Sir James is surely the embodiment of our English genius.'

" 'How, sir?' asked Sir James, gratified, but dimly conscious of an ironic daemon dancing in Adair's mordant brain.

" 'Because, sir, out of the cackle of the geese, you have conjured Pretorian harmony.'

"The clocks of Mortimer Towers chimed ten. Sir Fortescue prided himself upon his horological preciosity and was at pains to maintain a choral punctuality.

" 'Ohé,' groaned Mrs Rutland. 'Ten o'clock is the Great Divide between Town and Country. In Town we are meeting; in the Country we are parting.'

" 'Not of my seeking,' hospitably volunteered Sir Fortescue.

" 'We have far to go,' sighed Lady Dalrymple; 'indeed it is a far cry to the borders of your spacious domain.'

" 'We'll cut it up some day soon,' said Adair cheerfully. 'We lawyers will get some pickings.'

" 'Unless our commercial Bonar Law buys you off,' said Mrs Rutland, rising.

"During the evening George Farley had been counting the looks and tones of Rosamond and barely noting scraps of dialogue. With glowing brown eyes he beckoned Rosamond into a windowed alcove.

“ ‘Dearest, your father consents. More! He gives his blessing. I think I feel humble; I know I am proud and happy.’

“ ‘I feared, yet did not fear, my darling. I wish Uncle Anthony were here.’

“ ‘He would not come, averring that he is an impenitent Democrat and Guildsman. He said that if he chanced to encounter Sir James Swinnerton the guests might think the viands were Vesuvian lava. He bade me fare forth on my love adventure and said he would stay in and add some lines to his pilgrim’s scrip.’

“ ‘The dreadful man!’

“ ‘He is my earthly trinity—father, mother, uncle,’ said George.

“ ‘Give him my love and duty,’ said Rosamond tenderly.

“ The guests were already in the hall, Mrs Rutland, with Colonel Desmond cavaliering, showing her sinuous grace, even under her winter cloak. Lady Dalrymple, battened down like a frigate chartered to cross the bar, was the first to glimpse Rosamond as she swam out of the drawing-room.

“ ‘I see four bright eyes,’ she cried.

“ ‘Can you see two light hearts?’ asked George.

“ ‘May I blazon it, Sir Fortescue?’

“ ‘You may throw discretion to the winds and proclaim it to the high heavens,’ said Sir Fortescue.

“ ‘Another kiss, dear Rosamond. You are a dainty maid and George is a handsome squire; but I suspect you are two babes in a rose-bower.’

“ She held out her ungloved hand to George, who, gallantly kissing it, escorted her down the steps to

her barouche. It was dimly lit, redolent of the antique."

"CHAP. XIV.—OUR HERO, ON HIS MORNING RIDE,
MEETS A FAIRY WHO QUIZZES HIM

"Early morning after his betrothal saw George Farley step briskly out of his uncle's house, 'White Nights,' to find his horse champing fidgetly. He quickly glanced at bit, bridle, crupper and belly-band, then jumped lightly astride, and was off at the gallop. He picturesquely fitted the saddle. Mrs Rutland had said that he had the leg of the county, which, like most of her happy *mots*, was oracularly obvious. Graceful and athletic, he skimmed field and ditch, flying the English hedgerows with natural and rhythmic momentum. He rode as with high purpose, clear-eyed, to his mark, drawing rein and dismounting at the fairy ring, near Bluebell Dell.

"Love is Demos in Æther, touching and brushing prince and peasant ; it is the Great Leveller, armed, not with pike and blunderbuss, but with wings. Love is the Divine Elevator, whisking on its enchanted carpet all its pilgrims to the starry regions queened by Venus. Love is Bacchus in the laughing custody of Apollo and Admetus. Above all, it is the Great Necromancer, drawing to his magic circle all earth's children pierced with the dart, who listen intent to his incantations.

"George Farley came to the fairy ring under the fascination of the Great Necromancer.

"Standing in the centre he looked towards the

dell, already shimmering blue, waiting in reverie. Fairies and deities might surely nod knowingly at him, now that his love was sealed. Not long did he wait ; Pandora with her jewelled casket rose from her flowered couch and drew to him with quizzical smile.

“ ‘ I thought at first you were Minerva ; but I see by your box that you are Pandora. What have you in it for me ? ’

“ ‘ For—— ? ’

“ ‘ For us,’ said George shyly.

Pandora’s eyes made heroical failure to look grave.

“ ‘ Open and see.’

“ George touched the spring and looked in. The casket presented an encased void. His blank disappointment sobered the fairy goddess.

“ ‘ The box is yours ; you must fill it yourself.’

“ After the morning’s adventure perilously near the verge of dreamland, breakfast with Uncle Anthony was bereft of romance. The older man laughingly told him that the older generation trained the better trenchermen. George made frank admission and began building a castle in Spain. A letter was handed to him by the butler. He courageously feigned unconcernment. Uncle Anthony broke the filmy substance of his heroical pretence :

“ ‘ Dear lad, I fear disloyalty. The Queen’s Gracious Message brooks no delay. Open it instantly.’ George opened and read :

“ ‘ DEAREST,

“ ‘ The night was clear and mild. I sat at my open window and waited for a message from

my king. It came on the balmy breeze under the moon's silver canopy, filling me with great happiness. It said that my day of womanhood had come.

" 'Father asks if Uncle Anthony and you will ride over to lunch. Come quickly.

" 'Your

" 'ROSAMOND.' "

Am I daft? Not a bit! Home-building is a grave and dignified affair. I have told you, by fable and innuendo, all I know about it. I can now only pray that, escaping storm and squall, avoiding rock and shoal, you may happily round Marita Point and set out, full sail, for the open sea.

A word or two of advice . . .

Peste! I must be off. The tram superintendent has just told me that there is a break in the line. He says that the rail at that point is so rotten that no self-respecting snake would have its back broken upon it.

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

XX: CONCERNING POLITICS

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I was delighted (and a little envious) to hear from Halliday of your clever and amusing speech at the Union. He tells me that the fellows are all sorry that you do not speak more frequently. I wish you had frankly told me of it yourself. There is much to recommend in the English habit of personal modesty, of careful understatement of one's possessions or attainments, particularly before strangers ; but it has downright disadvantages. Understatement may be as misleading or dangerous as overstatement. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is not entitled to credit for a big surplus. It means that his estimates were faulty. In like manner, in estimating your capacities and prospects, you may positively injure your future by not boldly claiming from Fate all (and a little more) to which you are entitled. Your title to it is measured by your hopes tempered by your will-power. I do not, of course, mean that you should swagger or talk vaingloriously. Do not talk at all ; confront the world with the accomplished fact. But to me or to any trusted familiar speak frankly, aiming to state your condition of mind or estate with precision. Unless you do this, there is a real danger that your inner consciousness may respond to your outer modesty. The result might be that you would grow into an ineffective English gentleman, of undoubted *bon ton*, leaving the work of the world to the less delicately contrived. You would be an ornament at the dinner-table and a nuisance in business. In material as in spiritual

affairs let your yea be yea and your nay nay. You will find that a habit of decision, of quick recognition of your abilities and limitations, is essential in real life—is, indeed, more precious than rubies. Particularly does the political life call for it, if you would rise high in power. For it is in crises, both great and small, that the man of decision and self-confidence asserts himself and wins the political prize—leadership and power.

When I speak of leadership, please observe that I confine the term to its strictly political meaning. There is a political type known to us—suave, voluble, persuasive, respectable. It lives upon the political small change of the passing hour, gambling upon the tidal changes of public opinion, like outside brokers who trade on tips from their masters of the inner financial ring. Leadership comes to those who correctly guess, or have a natural *flair* for the drift of the electoral current. Once secured, it is maintained by loyal and unquestioning co-operation with the political machine. A degrading life: for experience soon proves that it is evanescent and sterile. It is leadership without power. And the real prize is power. For my part, perhaps because I am old and disillusioned, I cannot conjecture why any sane man should be content to live, high or low, in the political hierarchy, conscious that the strong men of the world—the men with real power—quite palpably treat him with contempt. It is surely the most galling and humiliating position conceivable. The illusion that power is inherent in politics would be amusing were it not disastrous to our national life.

If then you are thinking of a political career, aim at real politics and not at the parlour-platform popularity, so dear to the Tadpoles and Tapers. I wonder whether some stray bits of conversation I have had recently with Rafael of Placentia would help you. My meeting with him is a little romance. A few months ago, a Spanish Indian rode in and asked for me. He introduced himself as having journeyed far with a message to the gracious Señor from Don Rafael of Placentia. The name was new to me, so I opened his letter with some curiosity. It read :

“ DEAR SIR,

“ Although, as the crow flies, we are not far apart, worlds sunder us by our primitive means of communication. I am, unhappily, very far away. Nevertheless, it has been told to me across the chasm that you strive for greater things than rich crops (which God prosper) ; that you read books ; that you are accounted a wise man.

“ I have, alas ! too often heard of men alleged to think and to read. I have cast my line to hook them, with the tense expectancy of one fishing for tarpon. When caught, they have proved themselves June fish or young sharks and poor sport. Disappointed, I do not lose courage. So I address you in the spirit of the sportsman, ever ready for a prize or a disappointment.

“ Pray, sir, send by my man any recent books or other literature not actually trashy or transitory. And if you could follow your literature with a personal visit, I should indeed be happy.

"Believe me that I write sincerely and without arrogance.

"Yours faithfully,

"RAFAEL OF PLACENTIA."

The hunger of this man for intellectual companionship impressed me most, even though I smiled at the humour of the situation. Nor was my vanity untouched by the implied compliment that my reputation for wisdom had travelled across the mountains and the great silences. So I sent to him the book about which I have already told you—*National Guilds*—and a new volume, just published—*A History of Economic Doctrines*, by MM. Gide and Rist. I also packed a recent file of *The New Age* and stray copies of various reviews. With them I sent a note expressing the hope that he might find something of interest and told him that a visit was not impossible.

Of course the names of Gide and Rist are known to you. I had heard vaguely of Rist, but Gide's name was quite familiar. I do not think we have any economist in Great Britain whose authority is as high, and certainly none who writes (and, I suspect, thinks) with such clearness. The beauty of a clear thinker is that not only do you know what he means, but his limitations are obvious. Its Gallic clarity makes the book an oasis in the arid wilderness of economic doctrine and theory. France is famous for its adherence to doctrine; it very rightly avoids 'applied economics.' And so, from the Physiocrats and Adam Smith down to the last fad in 1910 or thereabouts, here you will find economic doctrines

stated in their true perspective and in their relation each to the others. The publishers (George G. Harrap and Co.) are unknown to me.¹ As Rafael of Placentia constantly referred to the book, and as I shall be telling you a good deal of what he said, I advise you to buy it.

I am not one of those who decry political economy. It is undoubtedly a science. None the less a science because it deals with inconstant factors. If the factors were constant, then economics would become a purely mathematical problem, easily dealt with by engineers and other technicians. Even if your factors change, as their relationships change, political economy, if its spirit be sincerely detached and disinterested, can discover with reasonable accuracy the main current of economic development. It cannot prophesy and it cannot measure the dynamic power of such factors as labour, invention, and discovery. It can tell us of the totality of work and wealth production; it affords a working hypothesis as to the motives that urge mankind in material affairs. It is as though it had framed working rules and regulations for the national factory. For a time these rules are explicitly obeyed, even though they are not implicitly accepted. Suddenly a strike or lock-out marks a new and unforeseen situation. Reference to these rules brings no light. They must be modified or perchance completely changed. The dynamic has shattered the static. Why should we blame the economist? He is not only human and therefore liable to err, but his profession is sternly delimited. He must not cross the frontier into

¹ This was true at the time the lines were written.

philosophy on one side, nor into politics on another, nor into religion, nor statistics, nor prophecy. The historical school has tried to force his hand and compel him to adopt induction, when deduction is undoubtedly his true *rôle*. Did you ever read the controversy between Ricardo and Carey? I must tell you about it.

Of course you know Ricardo's law of rent. Adam Smith, following the spirit but not the text of the Physiocrats, has based his theory of rent on the liberality of nature. Quite the contrary, affirmed Ricardo, rent is the child of the avarice of nature. Rent only appears "when the progress of population calls into cultivation land of an inferior quality or less advantageously situated." I need not worry you by an exposition of what you have already learnt in the schools. But it was vital to Ricardo's argument—reached by deduction—that as a fact the most fertile lands are occupied first. (Thus, if you work it out, you will find that Ricardo finally depends upon the theory that labour is the source of wealth—a fatal blow to Bastiat and his disciples.) Along came H. C. Carey, an American, who denied the fact. Fertile land in its natural state is either overrun with vegetation, which must be cleared, or is covered with water, which must be drained. Rich land is the terror of the emigrant. And so on, with wealth of detail. Great rejoicings from Bastiat et Cie. Of course Ricardo must be wrong. Look at France. Nearly everywhere the old town still crests the hill. *À bas* Ricardo! Now listen to M. Gide:

"If Carey were writing now he would probably express himself somewhat differently, for it is no

longer true even of the United States that the most fertile lands are still awaiting cultivation. Only the poorer and the more arid plains remain uncultivated, and here dry-farming has to be resorted to. So that even in the Far West Ricardo's theory is closer to the facts than Carey's. Rents are rising everywhere, and not a few American millionaires owe their fortunes to this fact."

Out of this little comedy you will be wise to glean the wisdom of pinning your faith to well-established abstract doctrine. 'Wise saws and modern instances' died with Shakespeare. But I am running away from my purpose. I really wanted to urge that a knowledge of economics is supremely valuable if you enter politics, and I quoted the Ricardo-Carey episode to prove the value of pure deduction. If you fail in this, you will fall to the level of amateur statisticians of the Chiozza Money kidney. They play in the Press the same part as the 'spell-binders' on the platform. Take infinite pains to base your life upon enduring doctrine, necessarily stated in abstract terms. If your conception of this doctrine really penetrates your being, you will be astonished at the ample liberty it affords you to deal with concrete life. It is the only liberty known to me that is truly the offspring of law: the only liberty that sows good seeds. Licence is generally supposed to be the abuse of liberty. It has no relation to liberty. It is action unlicensed by law. What then is the underlying principle of political economy? Undoubtedly self-interest. The later economists scoff at such an elemental motive. But it has good Biblical authority: "For where your treasure is,

there will your heart be also." But what constitutes "treasure"? "Ah! Now you're talking," as Americans say.

A few weeks after Rafael of Placentia's messenger had returned, along came old Nathaniel Davila, a Spanish half-breed, who has tracked game from the Atlantic to the Pacific. On his pack-mule were loaded about twenty tiger-skins, a number of deer-antlers, six oriole nests, and two hundred pounds of rubber. Having bought the lot, after tortuous argle-bargling, I asked him if he knew Don Rafael of Placentia. Natty's face brightened.

"*Si, Señor. El tiene un bon puño ; un corazón caliente ; y buenos sesos.*"

"You know that country?"

"*Es la palma de mi mano.*"

"You know how to get there?"

"*Si, Señor. Tres días en la linia ; yo se crusando las montañas ; y entre él hocotah.*"

"Right-o, Natty! We start to-morrow at day-break."

With two pack-mules, Natty and my man Clarke, who thinks I am not to be trusted out of his sight, our little cavalcade started, just as the sun was flecking the waters with iridescent darts. At first the going was easy. Then we moved more slowly through indefinite *picados*, occasionally skirting the pine lands. At midday, beside a stream, we dismounted for breakfast. Clarke busied himself with food, Natty watered the horses and mules, while I strolled about, finally disturbing a 'Tommy Gough' snake that had sleepily coiled itself in the surface roots of a tree. I discharged two bullets at it and

was, on the whole, glad that I missed. It did not deign to move. After breakfast we mounted and rode on. At four o'clock we came to a river in slight flood. There seemed some doubt whether we could cross. Natty and Clarke, with ceremonious courtesy, allowed me to go first. So, commending my watch to God (Paley interceding) and my riding-boots to the tender mercies of Clarke's brown polish, I spurred my beast into the deadly, immanent stream and luckily forded it at three feet six. As the sun canted its tireless way down to the west we approached a deserted Carib camp and determined to sleep there. Our appetites were well whetted and Clarke excelled himself. About eight o'clock and half-moon, my cot and net being ready, I lay down. Not so Natty and Clarke. Each had his guitar and each proceeded to tune up. Natty was first. Standing up, his right shoulder thrown back, he began :

*"Guarda esta flor
I piensa que es mi vida ;
Porque te adoro con amor ardiente,
Guarda la si, y piensa en mi mente
No cabe nadie—no cabe nadie
Si te pierdo á ti.
Qu' no te supe amar, eso es mentira,
Tu eres la imagen
Que vive en mi memoria.
Yo sin tu amor no quiero ni la gloria,
Benga la muerte—benga la muerte—
Si te pierdo á ti."*

The Honduran love song rose and fell in pleasant cadences, Natty's voice and guitar harmonizing. Clarke, who is a Jamaican negro and thinks of money rather than sentiment, took up the running :

“ My pay was forty cents a day (twang),
Forty cents a day (twang-twang),
Worked all day for forty cents pay (twang),
Forty cents a day (twang-twang).
Soon came pay-day, pay-day (twang—in *crescendo*),
Forty cents a day (twang-twang).
Boss said : ‘ Come another day ’ (twang—in *diminuendo*),
Forty cents a day,
Come another day.”
(Twing-twang, twing-twang, twing, twing, twing.)

The aromatic scents of the forest filling my nostrils, combined with the tapping of innumerable birds upon the barks of the immemorial trees, made me drowsy. I remembered nothing until Clarke brought my morning coffee.

In this wise did we travel until, on the afternoon of the third day, we reached Mount Placentia. Nearly half-way up on the south-west we descried a huge ledge, a plateau in all but name. Upon it, snugly ensconced, was the *hacienda* of Don Rafael. Our horses and pack-mules quickened their pace, even though we were mounting a track that wound steeply. A touch of coolness in the air indicated our increasing altitude. The track grew into a well-trimmed road, betokening permanent settlement. By four o'clock my spurs jingled on the cobble-stones of a trim yard, three parts surrounded by a rambling adobe building, whose open doorways and windows breathed knightly hospitality. I went up on the verandah and waited. In a minute a discreet old English butler, correctly dressed, came to me to say that the Don would surely be in soon and would I have some tea. “ Out here, please.” “ Yes, sir.”

A sense of some strange event impending kept me

too preoccupied to look out critically upon the plantation that changed in colour and sheen from the coffee uplands to the cacao down below, interspersed with vegetable and fruit trees. My concern for the moment was personal, my mood psychological. Don Rafael of Placentia intrigued me.

I had not long to wait. A quick, firm step recalled me from reverie. A large man, bearded, athletic. Natty had truly described him as having a big fist—*un bon puño*. A domed forehead, covered with black curly hair, steady grey eyes, whose vision lit up an aquiline nose. I rose to take his greeting. A sense of the familiar came to me, a dim stirring of vague memories.

“Tony Farley, as I’m a sinner!” he laughed.

“Geoffrey Raymond! Well, I’m damned!”

Thirty years ago his intimates had prophesied that in the end Geoffrey Raymond would lead England with gracious distinction in any conceivable crisis. Sane, solid, lovable, of great attainments, an exceptional career lay before him. And now England’s crisis was upon her and here before me stood Raymond. I remembered a dinner of choice souls, of which he was the centre. We laughed and argued and told stories well into the morning. I remembered a wonderful monologue of Raymond’s on Imperialism, in which he reviewed colonization and dominion from Corinth to Carthage, from Rome to Spain. And now he stood before me, grasping my hand in his ‘big fist.’ After a quarter of a century, here he was in the flesh, in this remote corner of Central America.

“What’s become of Waring?” I said gravely.

"Rats! Tony. Rats!" he jeered. "Waring became a Levantine pirate, didn't he? By the way, does anybody read Browning nowadays at home?"

"Lord, yes! Every mutual improvement society has a Browning night once a year. They generally bring down some University Extension prig."

"My hat! But let's have a drink."

"Rather! I see you have limes. A whisky sour for me." In this light way Don Rafael of Placentia rode off a situation not devoid of emotional tenseness.

"Sorry I wasn't here when you arrived, old chap. Fact is, I was umpiring a cricket match—Cacao *versus* Café. The Coffee boys won by ten runs."

"I have a boy on my estate who could earn money as a professional in England. Slow overarm, perfect length, natural movement. Each farm team insists on having him in turn."

"It's odd how round-arm bowling persists out here. They get marvellous pace. I've taught my boys that pitch is better than pace."

The day's final glow presaging night was upon us.

"Geoffrey, what have you to say for yourself?" He was lounging lazily against the upright of a French window. He stiffened on the instant, stepped to the edge of the verandah, waved his arm toward the mountain-side and slowly down to the valley.

"*Circumspice!*" he replied proudly.

"*Te absolve.*"

Geoffrey Raymond, Don Rafael of Placentia, lord of one hundred thousand acres, thinker, idealist,

planter, man of affairs, man of the world, more than all else a man, has come back into my life. Do you wonder that to-night the blood speeds quicker through my veins, that I am a little excited ?

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

XXI: THE POWER BEHIND THE THRONE

MY DEAR GEORGE,

When I awoke next morning cirrus clouds dreamily floated across a pale blue sky, while a gentle breeze rustled through trees and over shrubs. A day to invite repose. Still fatigued after my journey, I took coffee in bed, slowly mustering courage to face a shower-bath. Finally, impelled by shame rather than desire, I performed the sacred ritual, and then strolled down a path that led to the stables. Surrounded by lush pasture lands, I found housed here about a hundred horses and Texan mules. I expect you will think us uncivilized when I tell you that a good mule fetches a higher price than a horse. Two of my mules having recently died from snake-bites, the dæmon of the horse-dealer possessed me and I pondered whether I could get the best of it with Rafael. I did! For at that psychological moment he joined me with jolly morning greetings. "Do you trade in these?" I asked, with feigned indifference. "Rather!" said he; "got quite a decent name among the buyers. Don't know why. I cheat, like everybody else." "So do I," said I, laughing. "That grey chap is worth buying," answered Rafael. "He's only thirteen two," said I; "we want 'em fourteen." Rafael leaned against a post and chortled. "So you would do a trade, would you?" "I might," I answered, "if I could see anything that wasn't knock-kneed and spavined." "You have the root of the matter in you, Tony; but, my dear chap, it takes two to make a bargain.

I am returning with you, and I'll take a couple extra and leave 'em." "Now you've spoilt the deal," said I. "Not a bit of it ; only I've got the best of it." On our way to the house we watched an Indian girl churning butter, which looked like Devonshire cream. "It makes me feel peckish," said Rafael ; "let's go in and eat something."

After breakfast we sat out on the verandah, smoking excellent Mexican cigars. We were both silent, both thinking of this strange encounter.

"Journeys end in old friends meeting," said I sentimentiously.

"You would be less than human if you were not curious about me," Rafael remarked.

"I should have asked you if you hadn't volunteered it."

"There is really very little to tell you. My mother was Spanish ; her brother owned this place. When he died it came to me."

"How did your uncle hold it through the various revolutions ? "

"Nothing simpler. He became an American citizen. When trouble threatened he made a bee-line for the United States Consulate. I'm British, of course. Well, just when I had decided upon a political life, I found it necessary to come here to straighten things out. One month lengthened itself into a year. I grew fascinated. Here I felt a sense of immense usefulness. On the mountain-side my coffee-trees flourished ; down in the valley grew cacao."

"I grow mine on undulations."

"You needn't, you know, so long as you drain."

“ Yes ; but draining on the flat is the devil.”

“ Anyhow, I always liked animals—you haven’t seen my pigs yet—and horses and mules need careful tending. A cable arrived one morning announcing an impending dissolution. I felt like an unwilling bridegroom called to marry an ugly bride. I invited my soul. Here, thought I to myself, are animals and food-stuffs—good, honest food at that. If I go back it is only to fill people’s bellies with political east wind. It is curious that when you are in the thick of politics you do not realize the meaning of certain sinister aspects of it. You are in a swirl ; there are all kinds of excitements—mainly personal when you look back on it ; each day brings its petty crisis. There is literally no time to think seriously. The only thinking you do is to swot up platform arguments for your own side. In the autumn you are visiting, or shooting, or hunting. It’s tragically futile. Think of it, Tony—no time to think. You do not hear the still small voice : ‘ Be still and know that I am God.’ The buzzing in your ear is too loud.”

“ What are the sinister things you mentioned ? ”

“ Put bluntly, the money power. It permeates politics. You start as candidate. One of your rich supporters is Jones. He owns a big factory. Your agent, who is probably paid by Jones, impresses you with the immense importance of conciliating Jones. ‘ Damn Jones ! ’ you say to yourself ; but you want to win, so you yield little bits of your creed on industrial legislation to procure his goodwill. Along comes Smith. Smith is a big retailer and influential among the Wesleyans or Baptists. Your agent warns you not to antagonize Smith. When it comes

to shop hours and fines and living-in, Smith believes in the voluntary principle. Off goes another chip of your creed. And so it goes on. The more you politically bulge, the more your soul shrinks. In the early stages it is as crude and blatant as that. Higher up it is much more subtle. The big commercial magnates can make rings round the political leaders. They are equally subtle, almost invariably better informed, less scrupulous, and are personally and financially much more interested than the politicians. In this respect, our whole political life suffers from chronic humiliation."

"I suppose," said I, "the young commercial generation goes to Oxford and Cambridge so that as gentlemen they can more powerfully support their order."

"To come to the point, I decided to grow coffee and cocoa. I cabled infinite regrets. The decision once made, I was happy as a sandboy. *J'y suis, j'y reste*, said I to myself, said I. Nor have I ever cast one longing look behind."

"Why did you change your name? "

"I didn't ; it changed itself. It was my uncle's name. This was Rafael's plantation. The people insisted upon it. I rather like it, don't you? "

"Fits you like a glove, and goodly is your heritage."

It was natural that at first there should be some self-consciousness in our conversation, a suspicion of uneasiness slightly hectic. By now this had been completely dissipated and silence became possible. We smoked together, verbally *incommunicado*, in spirit *en rapport*.

"Your view of politics interests me immensely. I have been writing to my nephew very much in the same vein," I finally remarked.

"Mind you, I don't condemn economic power," said Rafael; "on the contrary, I welcome it. I strive after it myself. So do most of us."

"*Moi aussi*," I interjected.

"But the criminal thing is when it controls you when you ought to control it. As things are, it is a usurpation, an attack on the national majesty. Suppose that you decide to go on a long journey. Your resources are equal to the strain. You go to your banker and tell him your requirements. The banker hums and haws. 'I fear I cannot permit it,' he finally says. 'Damn your impudence, the money is mine!' you reply. 'No doubt,' says he; 'but I control it.' That is really the national position. Parliament thinks a certain course desirable. It costs money. Very good; we are a rich nation and can afford it. Does Parliament drive ahead on its great adventure? It passes a favourable resolution, but does not vote the money. 'The moment is not propitious,' say the political leaders; 'we must wait until the money market is more favourable.' When our statesmen are reduced to that posture it is time for a revolution."

"Just before the war it looked like coming."

"Yes; the war stopped it. The prospect of such a revolution was doubtless a factor in the decision for war."

"You talk like a Social Democrat."

"There's a lot to be said for Social Democracy. The trouble is that the Socialists don't know their

business. They suffer from political illusion. A Parliamentary majority! Pish! Do you think I care what the politicians do or say? I never even read about them. I know every big planter from here to the Pacific. We understand each other. But where should I be if my labourers came to me in a body and declined to work on the old terms? Suppose the movement were universal."

"You would make terms, of course."

"What else could I do? My only chance would be to get the question referred to Parliament. It would fizzle out there; we would see to that. Out here we are quite unorganized. Think what the money power can do when organized as it is organized in England. Apart from the political illusion, the Socialists make another mistake; they think capital must either command or succumb. There are only two alternatives, they assert. There are fifty, and, when threatened, you may be sure capital will take the least expected—the alternative most embarrassing to its enemies. Its Achilles' heel is the control of labour power. Pierce that and the whole industrial system—it is quite correct to call it the wage-system—collapses. No Parliament in the world can do that. The idea is grotesque. To Parliament, politics; to industry, economics."

"You talk as though they are two different spheres."

"To-day they are one and divisible. They must be divided. It is statesmanship's next great task. If one could discuss in Parliament really vital problems—the separation of the humanities from the technical in education, for example—without running

up against pursy vulgarians, I might go home and have a shot at politics. But you can't do it, Tony. Let's go for a ride."

He tapped his pipe vigorously against his boot, stood up, stretched himself, and pulled out his watch. Every movement was quick, decided, virile. We mounted and rode down toward the valley. I noticed that nothing escaped him. He knew the natural history of his district; he would pull up abruptly before some unfinished job; the domestic economy of his labourers he had at his finger-tips, smiling and joking at it with them. They too smiled when he approached. "Has the Commissary sent you down that violin, Alonzo?" "It's come." Or, "Hello, Ceito, that baby arrived yet?" Or, "I'll have that cottage ready for you next week, Theophilus." We examined a Maya ruin, shot a fat pigeon, plucked some orchids, galloped over a reach of open country, took tea with the overseer, joked with his wife, a vivacious Creole, admired the China Polands with their quaint snouts, a little reminiscent of the stage Irishman (why do we tolerate it?) and so home.

Before dinner Rafael concocted two celestial cocktails. I told him he could earn his living as a bartender. He told me of a man in New Orleans who earned five hundred dollars a month mixing gin-fizzes. Mention of New Orleans reminded me of my arrival there once after five months without a hot bath. I had met a New York architect who was returning after having plundered the Guatemalan churches. He had bought for five thousand dollars, generally by bribing the caretakers, what he could

sell for one hundred thousand. He insisted upon my dining with him that night at Antoine's. I reached my hotel at three o'clock in the afternoon. Choosing a bedroom with a bathroom attached, I had, without delay, turned on the hot and plunged in. Then I turned on the cold, and in three hours had contrived twenty hot and twenty cold baths. Rafael laughed and was about to reminisce when Smith solemnly announced dinner.

After some desultory conversation Rafael thanked me for sending the books and reviews. He was delighted with Gide and Rist.

"I picked up one interesting fact out of that book, Tony. You know we are apt to regard political economists as men of the study, remote from the surge of life, living in abstractions. As a fact, it is astonishing how many of them were men of affairs. Quesnay, the founder of the Physiocrats, was a doctor and a courtier. Most of that group were socially or financially 'in the swim.' J. B. Say began as an insurance broker, was a member of the Tribunate, became a cotton-spinner and made a fortune."

"I remember," said I, "that he changed his views after becoming a manufacturer."

"Modified them, Tony; not changed them. He very properly fused his experience into his ideas. That is the worst of you cynics. You sacrifice truth to cynicism."

"Germany is courageously fighting that cynicism shall have a place in the sun."

"Ricardo was a stockbroker; scooped two million in no time."

"The Jew will out even in economics."

"There you go again, Tony. Ricardo turned Christian, and Protestant at that. He became a Member of Parliament. It's curious and perhaps significant that two of our great economists, Ricardo and Marx, were Jews turned Christians."

"Doubtless they combined the heresies of both religions."

"Bastiat was a merchant, a farmer, and a *Deputé*. Proudhon was a master printer. Rodbertus was a Prussian landowner and member of the Diet or whatever they call their guttural talking-shop. Carey was a publisher. John Stuart Mill was a Member of Parliament."

"Like Sidney Webb, he also married a wife."

"What of it? I rather like that story of his Avignon hermitage."

"Perhaps. But I sometimes wonder whether his Victorian saintliness hadn't a good deal to do with his vogue. Political economy was respectable before; Mill gave it eloquence and unction. It became a holy crusade. Liberty!"

"He believed every word of it. Anyhow, I like to know that our political economy was in some measure evolved by men who knew the difference between an invoice and a bill of exchange."

"It is worth remembering, too, that Nassau Senior, the veritable arch-priest of Manchesterism, was an Oxford professor," I remarked.

"And therefore a man of affairs, my dear Tony. For he could not have been a professor in those days unless he was a three-bottle man."

"*Non sequitur*, you ass!"

At this point Smith announced the arrival of Don

José Ramiro d'Allejuela y Arroyan, General y Commandante. Rafael drew a wry face and told Smith to conduct him to his study.

"Baksheesh!" he said to me. "I'm afraid it will be a slow and tortuous affair, Tony."

"Well, I shall go and write to my graceless scamp of a nephew. Don't let the grandee skin you."

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

XXII: THE IMPORTANCE OF POLITICS

MY DEAR GEORGE,

This Placentia Estate, so well ordered, so exquisitely situated, is Rafael's complete justification. He chose the better part when he forswore politics and settled here. Yet, when I consider the condition of affairs at home and the type of politician who guides our destinies, I am jealous of this place and find myself ardently wishing that Geoffrey Raymond's acute brain and serene spirit were placed at the service of the Mother Country. This wish is accompanied by the disquieting thought that there are probably others of equal attainments and fine temper who have retired from or never entered public life because pure politics has been vitiated by impure financial considerations.

I think I told you in my last letter of a stray remark of Rafael's illustrating the confusion between politics and economics. He said that if he could discuss the humanities of education and technical instruction without the interference of money, he might return to England. I have since hit upon a passage in *National Guilds* confirming Rafael's view, but I am quoting it with an ulterior purpose :

"We appear to be doomed to oscillate in our national education between the humanistic and the technical, between the civic and the industrial, between the literary and the commercial ; with small satisfaction to either party, and with disaster in the end to the nation as a whole."

I do not think that the truth of this criticism can be seriously contested. It appears to me to be

written by a man who knows education from the inside. It is a terrible comment upon the spiritual condition of England. But change the word 'humanistic' into 'political' and 'technical' into 'economic.' Now read again :

"We appear to be doomed in our national life to oscillate between the political and the economic, between the civic and the industrial, with small satisfaction to either party, and with disaster in the end to the nation as a whole."

Is not the parallel complete ? Is it not deadly ?

Observe that the inculcation of the humanities is so beautiful that we should desire it ; technical instruction is essential ; political life is vital ; economic development, if not equally vital, is at least a tremendous part of our national anatomy. We appear in these later times to have become so muddy-brained that we do not distinguish between these vital essences ; we indiscriminately mix them in one crucible, "with disaster in the end to the nation as a whole." I wish, my boy, I were as young as you, with your chances. A mission of national clarification, of definition and limitation of functions, inevitably leading to the release of the spirit from degrading bondage : if you are intent upon a public career, compare such a mission with the mean and paltry shifts of petty politics. If you choose the former, God speed you ; if the latter, may you be damned !

The assumption still prevails in Great Britain that our political leaders are wholly free from the influence of the 'interests.' The assumption is of some value, because it is at least a recognition that spiritual

considerations (politics, rightly understood, is a nice balance of spiritual truths) prevail over material considerations. Alas! it is only an assumption. If we could buy our politicians in the illicit sense, we might rectify the evil by changing them, or by a Pride's purge. In that sense, however, our politicians are not really venal. The evil is more deeply rooted; they one and all believe in the essential justice and wisdom of the existing *régime*. The 'interests' are dominant because the politicians see no reason why they shouldn't be. Protesting their independence, they bow to the fact; they welcome it. It is not hypocrisy; it is heresy.

The influence upon character of this hopelessly inconsistent posture of affairs is not far to seek. Why is it commonly said that political promises are mere pie-crust? Why are national treaties regarded as the first act in a drama of national perfidy? No proof is required. It would be easy to adduce several thousands of them at any general election. It suffices that there is universal incredulity in political promises. Politicians' assertions are regarded precisely as quack doctors'! In plain English, politics is a conspiracy of platform lies and screened intrigue. Gentlemen naturally avoid it. The vicious circle in which politicians move is easily described. John Smith is a candidate, making certain promises. After a few years he is reminded that his promises remain unhonoured. Asked for an explanation, he says that he did his best, but the interests were too strong. "Then why didn't you resign?" "Oh, that would do no good, for if I am re-elected we are no better off, and if I am defeated we are worse off."

The first effect, then, of the subjugation of ideas by money is that a morally low type of politician gains ascendancy—one who by cunning and falsehood runs with the hare and hunts with the hounds. It is cynicism enthroned. There is a passage in Ruskin somewhere in which he affirms that the habits of the ruling classes inevitably permeate downward. So it is in politics. The Liberals imitate the Tories, the Nationalists the Liberals (watch them at the National Liberal Club), the Labourists (when father turns, we all turn) slavishly imitate the Nationalists. The result is that cunning and loquacity come to the top while modesty and quality remain ignored and unrequited. I am thinking particularly of Richard Tudor.

When one regards the self-satisfied pumpkins and manikins who sit on the Labour benches in Parliament, it is impossible to realize that they are the illegitimate offspring of a movement which in the late eighties and early nineties drew to it a legion of generous young men to whom it seemed to be regeneration and life, after the deathly influence of the Gladstone period. Very willingly did they sacrifice themselves. Nothing was too humble for them to do. They freely spent time, money, and their own lives. To them it was no political adventure; it was a sacrament. Emancipation! Each and all, their elastic step betokened a new constitution in the waistcoat pocket. And none was of a more generous mind, none more enthusiastic, than Richard Tudor.

The last of an old and distinguished Welsh family, he carried his breeding lightly but palpably in speech and bearing. He was a civil servant with a small

private income. He lived simply ; his wants were few. His main expenditure was on books and music. Who can tell what went into his spiritual and intellectual make-up ? He would turn from his beloved Beethoven to Welsh mediæval war-songs, of which he had collected a great number, setting some to his own music. He reconstructed the ancient architecture of St David's and Caerphilly. I think his revolt was at bottom directed against a system that had degraded his people from brave and chivalrous warriors into coal-miners and tinsplate workers. The Welsh valleys, through which we sometimes tramped, beckoned to him to lead his people out and to smash the strange gods which they ignorantly worshipped. But he was by no means a mediævalist. He had mastered Ricardo, Stanley Jevons and Marx. No Blue Book on social conditions escaped him. I have somewhere a memorandum which he wrote on the Industrial Remuneration Conference. Already he had detected strains and tendencies, which later disclosed themselves. To the Socialist and Labour movement of that decade this man (intensely practical because he was a dreamer) gave himself without reservation and in the spirit of the devotee : "Do with me as Thou wilt, O Lord." A rich acquisition, eh ?

On looking back over those early ^{very} days, so strenuous and absorbing, I hardly know whether to be amused or angry. Certainly amused at our illusions, even though our expectations, never to be realized, seem pathetic. Not for years after did actuality "brush with ruthless touch the bloom of fancy from the briar of fact." Angry, in the memory of young

men like Tudor being broken on the wheel of insincere politics and exploited by ambitious Labourists not worthy to unloose his latches. Tudor was untiring. He dragged me into endless adventures and imbroglios. "Come on, Tony, damn you! Don't be so lazy. Let's go to the Trade Council and have a rumpus. Give 'em ideas, my boy." Or, "Let's concoct a letter to *The Daily Press*. I want to knife Evans. Do you know what Evans is? He's a dirty little party hack." Or, "There's a committee to-night. Be sure you come. I want to get down Shaw or Webb." Or, "Let's distribute leaflets to-night. I've just bought 2000 from the Fabian Society." Or, "Let's hold an open-air meeting to-night. There's a gorgeous new pitch down at Newtown. If we don't capture it, the Salvation Army will." I can close my eyes and see him seated at a table, sharp-featured, with long, pointed, restless fingers. Around sit a number of working men, whose blunted fingers are in themselves a parable. We are discussing a public meeting in the Town Hall. Tudor is patient and courteous. He suggests that Williams shall move the resolution, that Rowe shall second it, to be supported by our lecturer. He proposes that Chapple (a leather-lunged Trade Union official, many years later to become mayor of the town) shall preside. Heavens! the endless chatter and bickering over so small a matter! At length it is over and we are free to go. We walk together to Tudor's house. Supper is waiting. We are hungry and excited. Another step toward the great, far-off, divine event! Our excitement gradually dies away. It is late, and we have done our day's work, in addition to this our

contribution to 'the cause.' We go into Tudor's study, where are lounge chairs and tobacco. Ha ! This is good. Tudor, nervous and highly strung, feels lassitude creeping over him. But his brain is active. Physical exhaustion leaves a tireless mind. He sits at the piano. Strains of Beethoven, of Mendelssohn shoot like forked lightning through thick clouds of tobacco smoke. Tudor forgets us in an improvised reverie, at first soothing, then provocative. The walls fall away and we are carried by magic levitation back to the ancient days and the ancient ways. Knights and vassals march cautiously (a deep chord, struck at intervals, warns us to beware of an ambush) against the castle, on whose battlements bowmen run hither and thither. Crash ! A bloody fight is toward. Cut and thrust, cut and thrust : the notes in G major hurtle after each other in thrilled excitement. A warning now strikes the ear, a slower movement gradually discloses itself out of the medley of the musical *mêlée* ; death is all around the drawbridge ; let us commend to God the souls of brave men. Boom, boom, boom : the bass signals a passing requiem. But the fight ? Again we are back in the upper notes, which clang and jingle ; overcoming stout resistance, we cross the moat and hack and hew our way up the winding stairway. Victory ! Tudor's fingers dance deftly over the keyboard. Our gallant foe yields ; but we honour him. So now the music moves with slow majesty, telling us of the inevitableness of tragedy and failure. Relentless is fate ; yet not unkind, for it leaves to us memory and only deprives us of honour should we prove unworthy. Hints of a Gregorian

chant remind us that we are passing into the Christian era. "Is it peace?" plaintively pipes the treble. "War and rapine and murder," thunders the bass; "not peace, but a sword." Mankind is in pain and travail; the thought of it sombrely beats against our hearts by an ever-recurrent minor note. Courage! The Marseillaise are marching on Paris. A new birth in a flood of blood! Horror gradually submits to brutal strength, which in the guise of a dictator strikes left and right. "How long, O Lord, how long?" Yet hope prevails; the kindly earth yields its fruit; man's labour is not in vain; beauty is not destroyed—its eyes shine, yet with saddened memories of monstrous wrongs monstrously avenged. Birds sing; water mirthfully trills its way over the mountain ledges; the winds sing a song of cleanliness and regeneration. . . .

For some years did Richard Tudor live this life, modest and untiring. Ambitious men exploited him, ate at his table, picked his brains and forgot him. But a time came when his gorge rose. Socialism had asserted itself; of its stimulating effect there could be no doubt. "Let us now be faithful in great things as we have been in small, and we are on the threshold of a new era," he would say. Came the political lure. A prominent Labour Socialist paid him a visit. "The time has come for political action on political lines," he said; "we must fight the enemy with his own weapons."

"You mean we must soil our fingers with the enemy's weapons," said Tudor.

"The cause will keep them clean," replied the expectant statesman, rolling his eyes unctuously.

"The cause can only keep them clean by keeping us out of it," insisted Tudor.

"I want to do something before I die," said the Labourist.

"I would rather die than do that," said Tudor quietly.

"I am sorry you take that line," answered the politician, "because we think this division should be fought. Indeed, we have reached an understanding with the Liberals that if we leave them alone somewhere else they will leave us alone here."

"What's the name of the candidate? Judas?"

"My name has been suggested. My Union will find the money."

"Will you have a drink before you go?"

"Don't mind if I do," said the obtuse fool.

Tudor scornfully poured him out some whisky and soda, standing stiff and distant while his guest drank.

"Not half bad. So-long!"

Tudor saw the work of years, into which he had put his vitality, his brilliant brain, his mordant thought, his soul, shattered at one blow by a vulgar little ignoramus backed by a rich trade union. He lay back in his chair, crushed and heartbroken. I found him so an hour after. I felt as I sat beside him, vainly comforting, that some loved one lay in a coffin upstairs. He applied for a year's leave. It was given just in time. His health broke down. For days and weeks he moped, miserable, depressed, incapable of any plan or project. I took the law into my own hands. Henry Brown was just off to examine some gold-mines in South Africa. "You

must go too," I said decisively. "If you say so, Tony," he replied listlessly. I saw to his outfit, his packing, his ticket. I took him down to Southampton, tipped his steward, and made him comfortable. "I don't think I shall see you again, Tony. It's all up." "Fudge! You and I are done with the damned movement. Other interests will buck you up." "I'll write you from Funchal," he said. And he did. I will send you a copy of that letter when I return.

Rafael, who has been at the far end of his plantation since sunrise, is riding up. It has been a quiet day and the memory of Richard Tudor makes me a little miserable. I owed him much.

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

XXIII: A CHANGE OF HEART

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Rafael does his work with smooth celerity. He never fusses, never hastens, never forgets. A cool and balanced mind like his radiates confidence throughout the staff, and even the labourers are finally seized with a sense of permanence and comfort. It sets one thinking about the value of temperament in the affairs of life, in the material no less than in the artistic. We heap our treasure into the lap of some great artiste, more, I think, because of temperament than technique, however supreme. We are apt to forget that the time spent on business is greater than the time allotted to leisure and pleasure. We, in fact, spend most of our lives on wealth production. Why not, then, make our working hours happier? Granted that with the vast majority work is a daily grind, may it not happen that some man with a sunny and urbane temperament may soften the grind and come near to making it bearable? Our industrial system is rapidly killing out any kind of pleasure in work, and, in the large sense, the killing process will continue until a new order of society kills the killing process. But in the local and restricted sense a humorist in the workshop is worth far more than his wages. Men work better when they laugh than when they are glum and moody. Perhaps one of these days we shall see advertisements for mechanics and other artisans with a vein of humour, for which there shall be extra pay. I do not doubt that the Court fool earned his money. Have you ever heard a group of

Russian peasants singing together as they mowed ? Alas ! harvesting machinery cuts down more than the crop.

Rafael rode up after a long day in the saddle, equable, self-poised, breathing a spiritual serenity. He was tired and a lounge chair on the verandah was obviously agreeable. His 'boy' relieved him of his spurs and riding-boots, and the stately Smith brought us drinks.

"Did the creole with the highfalutin Spanish title rob you ? "

Rafael laughed. "It hardly amounts to robbery ; the Government does not pay them, so we must, I suppose. However, I did a trade with him. You know that, unless we keep in with them, the officials have a little way of drafting our labourers into their *opéra bouffe* army. His Excellency suggested that I might with advantage make a small loan to the Government. I told him that the Government was far off, while he was very near, and that in England they say that charity begins at home. His Excellency smoothed his moustache and remarked that it, the motto, was good and appropriate to the moment. I replied that the name of his Excellency stood high for dignity and honour. His Excellency said that I was very kind. Not at all, said I, but I feared whether a little proposal I had in mind would offend his Excellency. His Excellency begged me to believe that he would surely understand. I therefore offered him fifty sols for every labourer he could turn over to me from the army. Net result : his Excellency pockets five thousand sols, and I get a hundred labourers."

"Thus do all things work together for the good of those who own the land."

"An irreverent jape, my dear Tony, but good Physiocratic doctrine."

"The Physiocratic movement was a delightful comedy."

"There's a lot to be said for it. Look at it how you will, we all instinctively realize that the ownership and cultivation of the land is altogether superior to industrialism."

"A habit of mind formed by tradition. The head of the tribe owned the land ; it was a concomitant of his majesty. Ever since, we have associated land-ownership with social dignity and power."

"Fudge ! It's because we draw our necessities out of the land, and he who owns or controls it is king. And that's not all ; from time immemorial there have been well-understood social duties as well as rights assigned to owners of the land."

"Likewise fudge ! These duties were mere allures to extract rent. The landlords have always instinctively known that the extraction of rent is fundamentally immoral, so they have wrapped it up in a napkin of social responsibility. The land-owner draws rent, and his wife gives blankets. A salve to the conscience. I do it myself !"

"So do I ; but you forget that you do not pay wages. You pay maintenance ; it is the labourer's point of view. For example, I do not contract to pay hospital charges. If I refused, they would think it strange. An industrial wage-earner expects to pay his own doctor. No ; we must regard ourselves as tribal patriarchs and act accordin'."

“Oddly enough, I learnt my first lesson on economic rent from an Irish landlord. The Irish landlords’ idea of social duties is to crack jokes with their tenants and go hunting with them. I met him at Carlsbad. I won some money from him at *écarté*. ‘Take the money, my boy,’ said he, ‘but it’s hard on my poor tenants, so it is.’ ‘How so?’ I asked. ‘Well, ye see, it affects me mental vision when I come to consider the rent reduction.’ ‘What principles do you act upon, anyway?’ ‘Faith, it’s simple enough. I find out what they have earnt during the last year. If they’ve done well, I generously reduce the rent ten per cent. ; if badly, why, twenty or mebbe twenty-five.’ ‘But if they’ve done well, why reduce it at all?’ ‘We must always maintain our reputation for generosity, so we fixed the original rent with an eye to regular reductions. It’s a great notion. When I announce a reduction, I feel the wings sproutin’ out of me shoulder-blades. Let’s go and look at the fat Jews gurglin’ the beastly water. Man, dear, I’m thankful there’s none of them in Ireland.’ ‘It’s just as well ; they’d see through the rent reduction dodge.’”

Rafael sat silent and pensive for some time. I think he was a little troubled in spirit. Sprung from the governing class, his spirit finely tempered by good breeding and an exceptional culture, the cynical attitude of the Irish aristocrat hurt him.

“The Irish landlords have had their rewards,” he finally remarked. “But their devilish indifference only throws into bolder relief the old Physiocratic ideal. The Physiocrats harped perpetually on duty. Apart from capital outlay—the ‘*avances foncières*,’

in their jargon—the landowners must carry great responsibilities and respond readily to social duties. They are to be stewards of the national wealth. They must devote their leisure and their best efforts to furthering the general interest ; their services to society must be gratuitous. And they must bear the whole burden of taxation.”

“ Yes ; they were the first single-taxers. I had that in mind when I described the Physiocratic movement as a comedy. The modern single-taxer wants a land tax to dislodge the landlord ; the Physiocrats wanted it to secure the maintenance of their system.”

“ But they were right and Henry George was wrong. Obviously, the tax-payers would dictate policy ; for where the tax-payers are, there you will discover economic power.”

“ My dear Rafael, you’re a generation behind the times. The economically strong habitually shift taxation on to the shoulders of the economically weak.”

“ They try, but they don’t succeed. ’Cos why ? They have the money and the other fellows haven’t. If you look more closely into it, you will be convinced that taxation disputes are between the different moneyed classes, each class possessing what the bureaucrat calls ‘ taxable capacity ’—landlord, manufacturer, brewer, farmer, tradesman. The bulk of the population in England and elsewhere lives on a small margin. Invade that margin and bang goes purchasing capacity, and that hits all the exploiting classes—first the tradesman, then the manufacturer, and last the landlord. Of course, I

don't defend it, but I am attracted by the Physiocratic doctrine that duties necessarily inhere in property."

"It depends upon what you mean by duty. If duty be a spontaneous response to some call, then it is not related to the routine of propertied life. However well ordered such routine may be, it nevertheless remains a defence of property and status. It may be duty to one's own order, but that is a far cry from duty to society, as a whole. This war has taught us that *noblesse oblige* is a quality of the spirit and not of property. My own Quaker ancestors have known it from the beginning."

"I fear," remarked Rafael, with a touch of regret, "that the fundamental assumption of the Physiocrats was wrong. They argued that the landed proprietors were of a 'natural order.' It would be rather nice, my dear Tony, if you and I belonged to a natural order, and were, therefore, beyond justification or reproach; then we could always do what we jolly well liked."

"We don't, and there's an end on't. The Physiocrats had no sense of humour, or they would have listened to Voltaire and Rousseau."

"I fancy Voltaire smelt Mother Church in the movement. They were all either good Catholics or politically committed that way. And, of course, property in the eyes of the Church was sacred. Gide makes a queer comment on this point. I'll just look it up. Here it is: 'We shall encounter this cult of property even during the terrible days of the French Revolution and the Reign of Terror. When all

respect for human life was quite lost, there still remained this respect for property.' "

"Of course! The French Revolution was not an attack on property; it was a protest against the theory that land is a more sacred form of property than hardware. The next revolution, imminent before the war, will be a proclamation that labour is more sacred than both land and hardware."

"That, my dear Tony, would not be a revolution; it would be a new epoch. Revolutions come either with force or the threat of force, but a new epoch is when God says, 'Let there be light,' and we are all suddenly reminiscent of the departed dark age. It is His greatest miracle. A change of civilization's heart!"

"I am prepared to pray for it—but without much confidence. It is difficult to forget that the same God ordained that there should be no light without heat. Doesn't the heat come first?"

"Oh, ye of little faith! But, you know, mankind is ready for a change of heart. The Physiocrats unconsciously proved it. Remember that they were the first to evolve any kind of political economy. (Adam Smith intended to dedicate his book to Quesnay, but the Frenchman died too soon.) Society hung together by vague religious sanctions which were wearing thin. Voltaire was asking searching questions, and there was none to answer him. Even the *Contrat Social*, although remote, created a feeling of uneasiness. And then came Quesnay and his group with their delightfully welcome announcement that the proprietors were properly in possession; that it was the will of God; that it was the 'natural

order.' If it were not thoroughly established as a fact, no one nowadays would believe that Quesnay's *Tableau Économique* created an extraordinary *furor* and enthusiastic acclamation. It was the voice of a god. Mirabeau declared it was one of the three greatest inventions in the world, the other two being the invention of writing and the invention of money. The Abbé Baudeau was assured that all Europe would accept its teaching, to the eternal glory of the invention and the everlasting happiness of mankind. Hector Denis ranked it with the discovery of the circulation of the blood. Even Turgot fell a victim. My point is that all this feverish joy over a new doctrine meant that everybody was waiting for an assurance—for a modern Messiah, if you will. The Jews are not the only people willing to accept the Messianic idea."

"You must bear in mind that the Physiocrats proclaimed the divinity of the existing order. If somebody came along with a similar assurance to-day, I might be equally elated. But suppose Quesnay had hit the proprietors as hard as he soft-soaped them, what then?"

"True; but it does not affect my point. You see, they justified their extortions on a fallible authority. The next step was to discover the infallibility. They now had builded, well or ill, on human and not on divine authority. That is a tremendous step. Instead of an oracle, it becomes a working hypothesis. Let the true formula be found and mankind will go crusading. Find that formula and I will guarantee the soundness of mankind's heart."

"I hope you are right; but I remember that, from

Adam Smith down, all the economists have based themselves upon the substantial equity of things as they are. Thorold Rogers is the exception, and he is not 'good form,' for some reason I could never fathom. Even Marx sees labour as a commodity—a theory which for a century has not only degraded the manual workers, but the thinkers and the preachers."

Again Rafael remained silent, puffing vigorously at his pipe. It is delightful to be with a man who, whatever his predilections, will listen and give weight to what you say. With all his knowledge and experience he is modest. His motto might well be taken from Hannah's song: "Talk no more exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth." The lengthened shadows merged into darkness, the whinny of a horse sounded from the paddock, the doves cooed in their cotes, the birds nestled in silence; from my angle of the verandah I could just descry the evening star. Smith stole in with the lamps, and almost simultaneously the mountain-side and valley became jewelled with cottage lights, that first glimmered uncertainly and then glowed steady. Down the winding road an Indian loped his way, his lantern swinging with slow rhythm.

Rafael at length spoke, almost solemnly.

"Do you know, Tony, the rejection—the indignant rejection—of the present creed that labour is a commodity—a thing to be ranked with manure and horse-carts—might well mark a new epoch. I really hadn't thought about it before. I had accepted it as obvious and practical. But when I

examine it and even dimly realize its implications, I both see and feel that it is a damnable thing. It is not a creed, or even a theory ; it is an obsession. An obsession implies a siege, a surrounding by the enemy. To set the people free from it ! I stand by what I said : they are ready. I shall grow prophetic in a moment ! It reminds me of Moses at the well of Beer. Do you remember the passage : ‘ Gather the people together, and I will give them water.’ Then sang Israel this song :

Spring up, O well ; sing ye unto it :
The well which the princes digged,
Which the nobles of the people delved,
With the sceptre and with their staves.

Great ! Let's dress for dinner to-night and split a bottle of fizz. I feel like celebrating. Hum ! Ha ! Guests will wear their orders ! ”

Now that I have recorded our conversation, I wonder whether you will be bored when reading it. Perhaps it sounds commonplace in your modern age. But, to an old fogey like myself, it was both delightful and thrilling to watch a new idea germinate in Don Rafael's mind. Nor did I do all the giving. I got more than I gave. I touched his torch and felt a new faith in the possibilities of the human soul and the willingness of mankind to mount high. This strong and clean man transmits faith—the substance of things hoped for—with a smiling assurance not to be resisted.

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

XXIV: A PARLIAMENTARY SPEECH

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Dawdling over tea yesterday afternoon I told Rafael the story of Richard Tudor. He remarked that such cases are so numerous as to render them almost familiar, but none the less shocking. He said that such waste was tragic. He was emphatic that neither the Liberals nor Tories would have treated one of their best men so scurvily. I told him that in the Labour and Socialist groups it was the rule rather than the exception to knife any promising man who does not toe the official line.

"With the result," said Rafael, "that they haven't enough brains among them to seize their opportunities. The political and economic complications arising out of the war gave them brilliant chances. I couldn't count all those chances on my fingers and toes. Yet not one has been taken. They might have been a little clique of Plymouth Brethren."

"Wee Frees, judging by the Scotchness of their leaders."

"Broadly put, they had two main lines of action—political and industrial. After the Coalition they could have seized the Front Opposition Bench and boldly assumed the *rôle* of chief critic of the Government. Did they do it? They let that *passé* charlatan Chaplin become Opposition Leader, supported by rejected and disgruntled Ministers. By Jove! I wish I'd been there! Once seated there, they could have made terms with the Government on behalf of their own people that would have opened up vast vistas. What did they do? Their leader

made some piffing criticisms of Grey's diplomacy, and talked poppycock about international fraternity. I wonder if he would fire off the same speech at a burglar who entered his bedroom."

"He'd crawl under the sheet."

"Assuming, however, there were good reasons for not storming the Front Opposition Bench and proclaiming themselves the alternative Government, and assuming further that solid support of the Government was their proper cue, hadn't they enough *nous* among them to exact terms? Not they. They did what they were told like servile worms. Perhaps no intelligent person would care to be associated with them."

"Make to me the speech you might have made as Labour Leader of the Opposition."

Rafael laughed. "You're not a-talking shop, are you, Tony?"

"I'm perfectly serious," I answered.

He was leaning lightly against the rail of the verandah, shoulders well back, arms folded, his left-hand fingers twiddling an ancient pipe. "If you won't think me a pompous ass . . ."

"I won't; on the contrary, I shall be very grateful."

His brows puckered in thought for a minute or two, while I lit another cigar. Then, leaning slightly in my direction, Rafael made his one and only Parliamentary speech.¹

"MR SPEAKER,—The House is entitled to an explanation why my honourable friends and myself, not being of the Privy Council, have occupied this

¹ *Temp.* 1915.

Bench. I am glad to explain our reasons, both to the House and to the country. Let me say with emphasis that it is an explanation and not an apology—unless you construe the word in its original meaning.

“ Sir, we are here because we are the only alternative Government. The two orthodox political parties have coalesced that they may secure the maximum of efficiency and of unity. Should they fail, it would not mean the defeat of our country, but only of the existing order of society. Should they fail—I pray for their success—then we shall, without hesitation, take up the task they relinquish and prosecute the war to a successful issue.

“ While conscious of our responsibility, we assume it readily. Indeed, it is quite to our liking. For it is a sign that the nation has reached a new valuation of the work of the world. We now know that unremitting and skilled labour in factories and foundries is as essential to victory as that valour in battle which is natural to us, which is our precious heritage. If, then, the Government represents that old England, so rich in its traditions, so majestic in its power, we on this side represent a new England and a new Empire, equally rich in new renderings of the old traditions, equally majestic in a new power that shall conquer the world, not by force of arms, but by a reasoned—an inspired—application of human fellowship. The realities of war have taught us how victory must be achieved ; we shall not forget the lesson when peace comes.

“ We on this side of the House no longer stand for that narrow class interest formerly known as Labour

—an interest which excluded the non-manual workers. Personally, I have always regarded class representation in this House as a prostitution of the high purpose to which we are called. I have resented it, whether such representation came from railway directors or railway servants, whether from shipbuilders or shipwrights. If before the war we were as guilty as you in fostering class interests here, I now declare, without recrimination, that we have passed beyond that evil. In good time we shall evolve the appropriate machinery for the economic governance of our people—a new rendering of a great mediæval tradition—and so dedicate anew the work of this Parliament to the development of those spiritual elements without which no great nation can continue great. It is as true now as in ancient days that we live by light even as by bread. ‘The people which sat in darkness saw a great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, to them did light spring up.’

“In this stupendous crisis, when the destinies of the nations are in the balance, let me in no equivocal terms declare that we are at one with the Government in our determination to win this war. Nothing that we can do will remain undone in pursuit of that object. This war has blown to atoms many of our most cherished hopes. We dreamt of a world-federation, in which there would be ample play for divergent and even opposed ideals. An autocracy, entrenched (as are all autocracies) by an army strong enough to enforce its will on a docile people, has staked its hazard. Against our hopes and our principles, the God of War must decide. It is hateful

to us, but nothing remains save to win through, let the cost be what it may. We agree that the Government had no option but to fight for Belgium, but we now recognize that our entrance into the war was inevitable. This is the third great crisis in our history. The first was when we freed ourselves from the European comity and determined to revolve on our own Protestant axis. The second was when we successfully resisted the imposition upon ourselves and our colonies of the Code Napoléon. We shall resist with equal success every attempt to impose upon us the code of Prussian Kultur, which, in its practical aspects, presupposes an omnipotent bureaucracy. After all, sir, dispossessed though our working population may be of land and houses, this, nevertheless, is their country, their homeland. I have heard it said that the Tyrolese peasants who emigrate find that they must return home or die of nostalgia. Many of us know under what harsh conditions, both of Nature and of government, they labour. Is this country any less sacred to our own people, even though they be made of sterner stuff? '*Anglia irredenta!*' is now the cry of their hearts. Be careful how you thwart them! You have trained them in the art of war.

"I take this opportunity to warn particularly the Minister of Munitions that in the long-drawn struggle before us we do not intend to be put upon. This is our war as much as his, and, unless he frankly co-operates with us, we shall teach him a lesson which even his legion of obsequious scribblers will understand. We are not impressed with his platform pyrotechnics, his exhibitions of cheap courage and

affected plain speech. We are not deceived. For we know that colossal fortunes are being made out of the nation's necessities, and the Minister of Munitions remains a dumb dog. Indeed, we are not sure whether the Minister is not exploiting the political situation to his own advantage. Less talk and more humility would better become him. I would remind him that when the gods on high fall they fall far. We have satisfied ourselves that the vast mass of the workers at home are doing their utmost. They are doing it cheerfully and without the excitement and stimulus of active warfare. 'Munition strain' and 'munition fatigue' have now passed into medical terminology, and that fact alone refutes the Minister's false philippics.

"To-morrow I shall ask the Prime Minister what provisions the Government has in mind for the direct victims of the war—the wounded, the widows and orphans. Lest he and his colleagues are thinking of basing this work on the ancient precedents of parsimony and meanness, I hasten to inform him that we shall not tolerate for a single day the prospect of an army of military mendicants when peace has been declared. We have already called to the colours more than three million men, and we shall require five millions to win. Sir, it is prodigious. This voluntary army is the envy and admiration of the world. But our arrangements for the care and comfort of those who sacrificed themselves must be on an equally great scale. If there is to be poverty in the land, at least it must not be the price that men have paid for their wounds, and widows and children for their breadwinners. I may be told that the

terms were duly set before the men when they enlisted. I hope nobody will have the effrontery to suggest that the minimum terms thus guaranteed relieve us from further liability. It will be our duty to see to it that this minimum does not become the maximum. I do not doubt that there will be many cases of abuse, be the terms liberal or mean. The United States Pension List is a case in point. But the American people have never grudged it, and their retired soldiers have proved themselves self-respecting citizens. There is a type of busybody much too prevalent in this country who seizes upon every weakness—a soldier's drunken widow, an occasional fraud or what not—making it an excuse for stinginess or impudent interference in the private affairs of the pensioners. Perhaps it may be necessary to hang a few of these interlopers from prominent lamp-posts. At all events, we in this House must take a broad and long view of an unprecedented situation, and bid the charity-mongers begone.

“Already the anguished cries of the sore stricken have gone up into our ears ; we are agreed that these have the first charge upon our care. Less poignant, but even more important, will be the problem of industrial reorganization after the war. We cannot return to the *status quo ante bellum*. What, then, are the lines upon which we must proceed ? The sudden displacement of five million industrial workers is an event so stupendous that its implications transcend our vision. At least we know this : the producers of wealth will dominate the consumers. Those who neither toil nor spin and yet expect to live softly will receive a rude awakening. I do not agree that war

is a test of national greatness ; nor do I acquiesce in the extraordinary opinion expressed in this House by an honourable Member, just returned from the horrors of the Dardanelles, that war is the greatest of sports. But the strain imposed upon us by a great war is at least a searching test of our practical qualities. Heaven knows that my party makes no kind of pretence to have a panacea for the evils that lie before us. We know one thing, however : that organized labour must now be taken definitely into partnership ; that there must be a correlation of the productive elements of our national life. There is a celebrated passage in Saint-Simon's *Parabole Politique* which, with your permission, sir, I will read. It gives some inkling of my meaning. ' Imagine that France retains all her men of genius, whether in the arts and sciences or in the crafts and industries, but has the misfortune to lose on the same day the King's brother, the Duke of Angoulême, and all the other members of the Royal family ; all the Privy Councillors ; all the great officers of the Crown ; all Ministers of State ; all the Masters of Requests ; all the marshals, cardinals, archbishops, bishops, grand vicars, and canons ; all prefects and sub-prefects ; all Government employees ; all the judges ; and on top of that a hundred thousand proprietors—the cream of her nobility. Such an overwhelming catastrophe would certainly aggrieve the French, for they are a kindly disposed nation. But the loss of a hundred and thirty thousand of the best reputed individuals in the State would give rise to sorrow of a purely sentimental kind. It would not cause the community the least inconvenience.' I trust that I do not entertain any bloodthirsty senti-

ments to our own nobility—such as it is—but it is well to warn them that there will be only room in the new order of society for genuine workers. When you have called in the Trade Unions you cannot stop there. You must bring in the brain-workers too. You must, in fact, inaugurate a new Guild system, from which wagery is finally eliminated. Your returning soldiers having received pay will not willingly go back to wages.

“I hope that the Government will spontaneously call us into its confidence. Should it not do so, it may be necessary to stimulate its spontaneity! We want a real and not an artificial unity. But it will be artificial and dangerous unless the workers are brought to the council-board by right and not by favour or condescension. Providing such unity be reached, then, sir, I declare that we can walk with confidence in the black night, knowing in our hearts that soon the day will break and the shadows flee away.”

Rafael rose to speak in the late afternoon. The House seemed sombre, its members all dressed in mourning. Messengers, with their silver badges and chains, flitted noiselessly in and out. Members for the most part sat staring up at the painted glass ceiling through which the electric light came just when Rafael was warning the Minister of Munitions of the fate of the fallen gods. The House, now lighted, showed Ministers leaning forward and following every word of the speaker with tense expectancy. The Prime Minister, hands in pockets, watched Rafael closely, as though measuring the strength and skill

of a fellow-duellist. Mr Balfour seemed to appraise the speech by literary canons. There were no cheers nor cries of dissent. Rafael sat down in a silence almost solemn, as though his auditors had lapsed into the thrilled quiet that comes upon us at the appearance of a new portent. No one rose to reply, and the House adjourned. In the buzz of animated conversation that followed Rafael slipped away. Taking my arm, we together left the House through the St Stephen's passage and found ourselves walking along the Embankment. We finally turned up into the Temple Gardens and so into Fleet Street. We went into the "Cock" for a chop, and sat waiting. Then Rafael smiled.

"Tell me, Tony, did I make my meaning clear?"

"Clear! As a great comet blazoned on a moonless horizon."

The clink of spurs on the cobbled paths brought me back to reality. Rafael's pipe still hung pendulous in his fingers, but his head was turned sharply towards the verandah door, apparently sensing something unusual. The door opened, a soldier walked up, saluted and handed Rafael a letter. He turned to me. "A moment, please," and opened the envelope. Evidently a letter of some importance. He read it; then deliberately turned it over and read it again more slowly. He thanked the soldier graciously, and offered him hospitality. The soldier responded gratefully and sought entertainment in the kitchen.

"A revolution has begun on the Pacific Coast," said Rafael. "Arms have been imported from San

Francisco, and some of the western towns are in the hands of the insurgents. Old Don Balthazar has been clapped into prison, and seven cadets at the Military College have been shot—to encourage the others, I suppose. The Government has seized the railway and telegraph stations. It has suppressed all the papers except *El Liberal*, which is its official organ. War seems contagious, eh? ”

“ I’m not precisely surprised,” I answered. “ We heard down our way that Carranza intended giving your president a shaking for backing Villa and Zapata.”

“ Likely enough,” said Rafael. “ Governments, like individuals, pursue the vendetta.”

“ This will give you cause for anxiety. I’m at your disposal. If *de trop*, pack me off; if I can be useful, command me.”

“ Lawks-a-mussy, there ain’t no blooming hurry ! In a few days I shall probably hear something from the other side. Let’s wait. Meantime, I’m hungry as a hunter.”

“ Dinner is served,” announced the portly Smith. A day to be remembered !

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

XXV: A SOCIALIST ORATOR

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Although Rafael is vivacious and debonair, I know that he must be anxious about the revolution, whose raucous mutterings draw closer, if we may judge from excited rumour. It would be no joke for a gang of predatory rebels to bear down on this magnificent estate. Depend upon it, Rafael's priceless live stock would disappear. I suspect, however, that he is concerting plans, both political and defensive. I know that he will speak when he has anything definite to tell me, so, in the meantime, I endeavour, as judiciously as possible, to distract his thoughts from a peril that may actually impend, or may be already dissipated. And if you don't hear from me again, you may conclude that neither Rafael nor I got away in time.

After breakfast to-day we both seemed disposed to lounge. It was raining, and when it rains it rains. So we stayed indoors and gossiped. Rafael inquired about a number of men, some of whom seemed promising twenty years ago, while others had already put their brilliant futures behind them. Most of the old coterie were politicals, so it was inevitable that we should finally drift into politics. At Oxford, Rafael was influenced by T. H. Green. He now realized that Green's philosophy was inapplicable to modern facts. It was, in fact, Green's personal influence, half saintly, half robust, that counted. He next transferred his allegiance to John Morley, whose *Compromise* was just then all the rage. Rosebery he knew too well either to like or trust. But

leadership was not a necessity to Rafael. He was, even as a young man, strong enough to walk alone. He had dreams of some higher synthesis linking modern Radicalism with Socialism. He found, however, on closer acquaintance, that Radicalism had no basis, intellectual or social, while Socialism, even then, was forking—one shoot leading straight to bureaucracy, the other to the wilderness, to sterility. Above all, he found to his dismay that the Socialists did no serious reading, and were living on mere scraps of fugitive writings. Although they were voluble and plausible, they were the least knowledgeable of all his political associates. They lived on formulæ, argued from formulæ, mistook formulæ for principles. Even at that early date, he had observed that the Socialist movement was becoming a vested interest; that there was a sinister financial side to it. But as the other parties were ten times worse, he attached small importance to it.

“On the whole,” said Rafael, “the thing that did most harm to the Socialist movement was the Fabian tract *Facts for Socialists*. From that time on Socialism became an affair of peptonized assertions. Every Socialist quoted this tract, and never realized what a shadowy relation it had to the actual currents of thought and action.”

“I remember,” said I, laughing, “some fellow was continually writing the most revolutionary sentiments over the *nom de plume* of ‘Physiocrat’! And what’s more amusing, nobody ever picked him up on the point.”

“No doubt he had read some sentence from some Physiocratic writer that took his fancy.”

“ Do you remember that in your Parliament speech you quoted something that seemed terribly revolutionary from Saint-Simon ? There used to be a group of Socialists who called themselves Saint-Simonians. They never once found out that their patron saint was one of the first of the Manchester school.”

“ Isn’t that putting it rather strong ? ”

“ I don’t think so. It is curious that Socialists quote him as a Socialist, but I doubt if he had the slightest conception of Socialism. He wrote about the transformation of private property, which sounds Socialist ; but really what he contended for was productive property—in other words, capital. He regarded private property as the basis of the social fabric. Then he talked and wrote about organizing society to secure the greatest advantage to the greatest number. But then so did Bentham. In the *Parabole Politique*, from which you quoted, he regards the savants, industrial leaders, bankers, and merchants as the true governors who wield power. That is precisely the Manchester attitude. Cobden might have quoted what you quoted.”

“ Then I am undone ! ” laughed Rafael.

“ Not a bit of it ! Personally, I have always had a sneaking regard for Cobden. But worse remains to be told : Saint-Simon was the archpriest of *laissez-faire*. To him, industrial life was everything ; the State was a mere façade.”

“ Better call him a Syndicalist and be done with it.”

“ Don’t mind if I do. He was a capitalist-syndicalist. Even yet I have not completed the tale

of his iniquities : he was anti-democratic. The industrial chiefs had to do everything ; the workers must be quiescent and docile. He was the founder of German bureaucratic Kultur."

"To think I quoted such a scoundrel !"

"The fact is that Saint-Simon was a natural reaction from Quesnay. To Quesnay, land was the sacred thing ; to Saint-Simon it was industry. Both men had distinguished followers, who influenced the course of French politics. Quesnay had Baudeau, Mirabeau, and Turgot. Saint-Simon had the brothers Péreire, Michel Chevalier, and Infantin. Here is a curious fact : Infantin negotiated the 1860 Treaty with Great Britain, and, unless my memory plays me false, the British delegate was Cobden."

"Birds of a feather !"

"No doubt a pure coincidence, as the defaulting cashier observed when the missing cash-box was found on the same train."

"When you come to think of it, the real truth is that the Socialist and political economist are barking up different trees. The Socialist talks rather grandiloquently about political economy ; but he is really only a social economist."

"Then why the deuce doesn't he say so ?"

"There are really two unrelated answers. First, the social economist rather plumes himself that his proposals are sound from the politico-economic standpoint, and he has a fond ambition to be accepted as a political economist, which is regarded as the higher branch of the profession. The second answer is purely human : those in revolt are *ex hypothesi* the victims ; presumably, therefore, they have had

few opportunities. They are, in consequence, compelled to live on intellectual scraps. We must not blame them if they make the most of their little learning. Don't let us be prigs ; we're in danger of it."

"No ; I don't think I'm a prig : I've always prided myself that I'm not. Probably it is my Irish blood, which demands logic and consistency. What I dislike is the pretence, the affectation of special knowledge. If a man says that he has been too much on the grind to learn much, but that he knows where the shoe pinches, that's the man I respect. If I reply that, by good luck, my shoe does not pinch, but that I can help him because I have acquired some knowledge of shoes and their various kinds of pinches, and the man says that he'll work with me to abolish shoe-pinching, we are both performing a public duty. Knowledge and experience have joined forces. There's nothing priggish about that. But no sooner do we get going on our great anti-shoe-pinching crusade than up pops another fellow, who has read the celebrated Fabian tract *Facts for the Shoe-pinched*. He says to my colleague : 'Be careful ; be on your guard. Farley's shoes do not pinch him, so what does he know about it ? Now, not only do I know it by experience, but I have read *Facts for the Shoe-pinched*. You may trust me. But these middle-class chaps have you every time.' That is pretence—and cunning pretence, too ; for at the back of it lies a political job. The result is that I'm squeezed out, and the great crusade languishes from sheer intellectual inanition. The mental poverty of the poor is their destruction."

“ My dear Tony, we must be gentle and tolerant. Even the upstart who has read a bit may be presumed to have good intentions. Did you ever hear of George Satterthwaite? No? When I think of him, I’m tolerant. But I am permitted to smile. George was born of godly parents. Every Sunday, Old George and his missus went punctually to the Baptist Chapel. Old George believed that to be a Christian was to be lucky. He liked to quote from the Bible that being once young and now old he had never seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed beg bread. Old George hedged and ditched for a cousin of mine, and had never seen a railway. Young George came to his parents rather late. He was still young when they were old. My cousin took a fancy to the youngster, and had him taught the proverbial three R’s. Then, begad, young George taught in Sunday school. Old George had visions of his son becoming a ‘pastor.’ Gradually, young George acquired the gift of the gab. He developed ‘unction.’

“ Come we now to Chapter Two. The Independent Labour Party had just begun operations. Of course, you remember the Manningham strike. Some travelling agitator persuaded George that Christ was the first Socialist. Scripture texts floated in George’s mind that seemed to prove it. So George became a Christian Socialist. He began to speak at street-corners, and the crowd listened. He wrote to the village schoolmaster that the common people heard him gladly. Meantime the builder had told my cousin that Young George had gone dotty on Socialism, or some such crazy nonsense, and was neglecting his work. When the schoolmaster told the Squire

about the common people hearing George gladly, the Squire said: 'Tell George not to make a fool of himself.' Which words were duly reported to George. George felt hurt. He had some thoughts of writing to the Squire to remonstrate. But George comforted himself with the thought that he was blessed when men should revile him and say all manner of evil things about him. He would bear it for the 'cause.' It is difficult to tell you in measured language about the next awful thing that befell our hero. It is really too dreadful. Forgive my blushes. Can you stand it, Tony? Well, then, the Baptist pastor of George's chapel was a Liberal. Don't laugh! I assure you it was quite tragical. You couldn't expect George to stand it, could you? Fate ordained that the Labour Church should open its portals on Sunday afternoons and evenings. With an eye on that pastorate, George went to the Baptist Chapel on Sunday mornings; but on Sunday evenings he went to the Labour Church. Incidentally, there was a girl there, who sang in the choir. He could hear her voice, and it made his heart rejoice. And a day came—mark it red—when George took the chair and gave the reading—a chapter from *Merrie England*.

"Let us plunge boldly into Chapter Three. George's local fame spread a bit; they heard about him at Keighley. What's more, they invited him to speak to the comrades on a Tuesday night. George prinked and preened himself. He delivered his celebrated lecture, 'The Christ that is to be.' Afterward the secretary took him on one side. 'What is your fee, comrade?' George didn't know. It was

kudos and not money he sought. 'We generally give five shillings,' said the secretary. So George went back to Bradford pondering many things. It appeared to George that God was pointing a way for the exercise of his undoubted genius. Quite unsought, money—five shillings, no less—had been poured into his lap, like manna of old. Surely it was a sign not lightly to be ignored. The prospect of a Baptist pastorate hardly looked rosy. It meant a thorny path to get there. First, he must learn his trade. Then go 'local' for a time. Then years must be spent in some hamlet or village, preaching to a few faithful folk. Then a year or two at the College, in a Liberal and unsympathetic atmosphere. At the end of it, a stuffy chapel with a stipend of perhaps a hundred a year. And he had earned five shillings in an hour. Besides, he could probably improve on that. He soared to regions of half a sovereign and a sovereign on Sunday. Perhaps an organizer's job thrown in. And wasn't the Labour movement applied Christianity? To be sure it was. George was on the brink. It needed only a push.

"We must approach Chapter Four gravely, solemnly, as befits the crisis in George's pilgrimage. Turn down the lights and give us a slow movement on the harmonium. I said it needed a push. George got the push—in more senses than one. On a Sunday evening, George had delivered his soul-stirring lecture 'Thy Kingdom on this Earth'—yes, five shillings—down at Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and had missed the last train. So he was late at work on Monday morning. His employer, as you may surmise, didn't like it, and so gave him the push, or

the sack, or the order of the boot. Whatever you may call it, it was in very deed the push that sent George sheer o'er the crystal brink. In case you have forgotten it, I remind you that George, being the seed of the righteous, need not beg bread. No, Tony; far from it. George attended his I.L.P. Branch that night and told them all about it. Anger was kindled in their hearts. It came to this: that a man could not deliver his soul in Ashby-de-la-Zouch because of an inconvenient train service. They proclaimed George to be a martyr for the cause. Martyrdom! Splendid! So when George went lecturing, printed handbills preceded him, announcing him as 'the Bradford Martyr.' George's price went up accordingly; in fact, George became a draw. So much so that he married on the strength of it. And he read *Progress and Poverty*, *Farms, Fields, and Factories* and *Fabian Essays*. I heard at the time that his perorations were of a tropical verdure. George found that it was by no means roses all the way. The number of paying districts was strictly limited, and his pitch was too often queered by some middle-classer who charged no fee at all. It really seemed like blacklegging. Moreover, others were pressing on his heels. And all through the summer it was common open-air work, with precious little pay. So George tried for an organizer's job. Alas! his handwriting was much too stretchy, and there were by now lots of clerks in the movement. It was also generally decided that silent men were best, when it came to secretarial work.

"Chapter Five is for tears and lamentations. Mrs

George was a pretty little thing, pale-faced and anæmic. She wanted nourishing food, particularly just then, for she was with child. She lived very much on tea and bread and butter. So when a little girl came the weakened mother pined. She couldn't feed her baby, and that led to more expense. George was at his wits' end. He wrote to his old friend, the village schoolmaster. Old friends are best. George and his family came back. I happened just then to be staying with my cousin, who told me much of George's story with careless humour. He added: 'You know, Geoffrey, I'm to blame for it. He might have been useful about the farm. Why on earth did I let him have books to read. He's spoiled.' He sent fresh milk and jellies and things to poor little Mrs George, who soon gained strength, and even suckled her baby. Then my cousin, by chance, saw an advertisement offering for sale a flourishing newsagency and sweet business. It was being sacrificed for a beggarly twenty pounds, owing to the occupant—a widow—remarrying and moving to another town. The Squire called up George and told him of this. George was willing. So the business was bought, and George and Mrs George and the infant settled down in the little parlour behind the shop.

"*Finale*, my dear Tony, if you are still awake. Let us step into the shop for a paper. The glass door opens and out steps Mrs George in a clean blouse, her baby in her arms. She is bright and brisk and has a smile worth many coppers a week. But before the glass door swings back, look at George. He is in his shirt-sleeves and is collarless. A pair of carpet

slippers covers his feet, which are toasting before the fire. I think he must have sent his razor to be mended. One of George's celebrated lectures was 'The Economic Aspect of Woman's Work.' As the glass door closes, with a discreet little bang, George listlessly turns over last week's *Labour Leader*."

I was about to remark that the Tudor story had in it elements of great tragedy, in contrast with that of the nerveless George, when Smith announced the Señor Don Alfonso Rodriguez.

"I'll be with him in a moment. By the way, the Don will dine and sleep here."

"Oh, yes, sir," said Smith, trying to repress a smile; "he has already chosen his room and told me what to get for dinner."

"Now," said Rafael, "we shall know something about the Revolution."

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

XXVI: A LABOUR M.P.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

The sad story of George Satterthwaite came to mind this morning as a contrast to the modern Labour M.P. who, in his own way, has arrived. I began to wonder how Thomas Smithson would have told the story of an Labour M.P., and, being moved by an imp of mischief, I thought I would experiment in the Smithson style. I enclose the result, and can only hope it may amuse you. Rafael said that I must not take his laughter as any justification for such a cruel and inhuman performance.

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

[ENCLOSURE]

MR JOHN ROBINSON, M.P.

By THOMAS SMITHSON

(Reprinted, by permission, from The Puddleborough Citizen)

THE remarkable speech delivered by Mr John Robinson, the well-known and highly respected Labour Member for Puddleborough, on Welsh Dis-establishment, brings to the very forefront of British politics an impressive personality. A man of rugged honesty, of direct speech, penetrated with the spirit and even the language of the Bible—the great book that has made England what it is—Mr Robinson is now in the near succession to the chairmanship of the Labour Party. He is not, of course, a cultured man in the sense of the word in vogue in Oxford and Cam-

bridge ; he is innocent of Latin and Greek ; French and German he has, of course, heard at various international conferences. He recently confided to me that while he had the utmost respect and sympathy for his Continental comrades, he greatly preferred the tongue of Shakespeare and Milton and *The Daily News*. Under a little judicious pressure he admitted that probably the superior capacity of Englishmen was due to their language. " You see," he said, " English lends itself wonderfully to the exact expression of what a man wants to say, while I have often been struck with the difficulty that French and German comrades must necessarily encounter when engaged on the platform." I hasten to explain that these words were not uttered in any spirit of Anglo-Saxon superiority. The tone was one of genuine sympathy for less fortunate men. Mr Robinson seemed conscious of some possible misunderstanding on this point. " Don't mistake my meaning," he added, " but it is difficult to put it accurately. Perhaps you will gather what I am driving at if I put it in practical form. It is only those who speak English who could possibly have founded the I.L.P." And yet I have heard *bourgeois* journalists affirm that the Labour Party does not possess any men with a genuine literary instinct. It is, of course, a truism that one half the world never knows how the other half lives—and, I would humbly add, nor what the other half thinks. The ' flannelled fools ' and ' muddled oafs ' who come down from Oxford and Cambridge (what a flood of light that phrase, ' come down,' throws upon the Varsity mind !) seem to think that men like Mr Robinson can achieve their

eminence without ever opening a book. Little do they understand that the uncultured voters who honour men like Mr Robinson with their electoral confidences are just as much alive to the beauty and joy of life as others who are economically more favourably situated. As a matter of fact, Mr John Robinson (known to the Labour *cognoscenti* as 'Jack') is not only thoroughly familiar with the Bible (that well of English, pure and undefiled), but has read Ruskin's *Crown of Wild Olive*, *Unto this Last*, and other works of the great seer and prophet. When he joined the Middletown Mutual Improvement Society he carefully read every word of Carlyle's *Past and Present*, and subsequently gave a lecture upon "Carlyle's Message to the World." In this deeply interesting utterance he frankly admitted that, next to the Sermon on the Mount, Carlyle had most profoundly influenced him. There are many members of that Mutual Improvement Society who remember the thrill that passed through the audience as, with a deep chest note, he said the word "profoundly," stopping for a moment and then repeating it. Instantly everybody present realized that this was no ordinary man; that they were faced by a personality destined to make history.

The English Press has expressed great surprise that Mr Robinson, in the speech to which reference has already been made, should have shown such an intimate knowledge of Church and Chapel politics. Thus, that tried champion of the British democracy, P. W. W., of *The Daily News*, wrote :

"Nothing more surprised members on both sides of the House than Mr Robinson's well-informed

references to the literature of the subject. This rugged representative of the toiling masses, with his Northern accent, dressed in homely homespun, soon showed that he had been cradled in the traditions of the Free Churches. Without bitterness, but with an intensity of feeling that thrilled all those who are attuned to higher things, this plain man told of his early days when Nonconformity was a butt for the scoffers and the cynic ; how he had faced contumely and scorn rather than be false to the creed of his mother, that saintly woman who had gone to her premature grave, the victim of the oppression of the Established Church and all that pernicious system stands for. Even the Bishop of St Asaph, seated in the Peers' Gallery (himself a Nonconformist renegade) could scarce forbear to cheer."

"H. J.," the scholarly Lobby representative of the Imperialist *Daily Chronicle*, was struck with the same thought :

"Here was the *dernier cri* of the downtrodden proletariat. It was the brotherly hand of the Northern Saxon extended to the Cymri, who, in the fastnesses of the Welsh hills, have braved 'the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,' but have ever kept flying the flag of the Dragon. Big Ben boomed midnight, and Members hurried out of the House to the historic cry of 'Who goes home?' 'What did you think of Robinson's speech?' I asked Lloyd George, whose eyes were twinkling with the delight and joy of dialectical victory. 'Splendid! Magnificent! Now, really, what else can I say? Only this: it shows that the great heart of the Democracy throbs nobly to the Government's policy of Liberalism.'

With that the Chancellor of the Exchequer joined a group of his admirers, and was at once the merriest and wittiest grig among them."

More measured, but not less emphatic, was the verdict of the Parliamentary correspondent of *The Manchester Guardian* :

"Mr Robinson is a skilled negotiator in Trade Union disputes. He knows as much as any man living about wages and conditions of labour. It is his business ; but his speech to-night clearly demonstrated that in matters touching the soul and religious beliefs the working classes are the true inheritors of the Protestant tradition."

It would be sheer affectation on the part of our worthy M.P. to pretend that he is not pleased and even deeply touched by the friendly reception extended to his great speech on Welsh Disestablishment. "Yes," he said to me, with a suspicious moisture about his eyes, "I am frankly glad, but how I wish my old friend and mentor, the Rev. Matthew Keeling, were alive to witness it! You know I owe everything to him. I attended his Sunday school, and he always took a special fancy to me. Many's the wise thing he said when we would walk along together. 'Always remember, Jack, my lad, that wages are only of this life—work for higher wages if you can get them, always providing that you are a good and faithful servant ; but it is the eternal verities that finally count.' Yes, I have never forgotten what he used to say to me about the eternal verities. Fine phrase, isn't it? It was dear old Matthew Keeling that brought me to a knowledge of the Lord. Years after, when I was a young

man, he put me on the circuit of local preachers. Aye, I owe him a good deal. He introduced me to my wife. 'A fine, upstanding, godly wench,' he told me, with a smile. And so she was and is, God bless her! To my old eyes she's as young and bonny as ever."

It is very difficult to get Mr Robinson to talk of his early days. He always speaks of his mother with an abiding reverence. "She was an angel. Ah! who can tell how precious is the memory of a good mother?" he said to me one day. "I was afraid to do wrong lest she should know. If she found me out (for boys will be boys, you know) she would just say, 'Oh, Jack!' and I would hang my head in shame."

He was apprenticed to his uncle, a Primitive Methodist deacon, who died soon after, leaving the future M.P. on his beam ends, if one may use a slightly vulgar expression. However, he soon found another job, and worked from six in the morning until half-past five in the evening. He joined his union, and being handy with his pen and tongue (thanks to the Rev. Matthew Keeling) he was soon elected branch secretary. Then each evening found something to occupy his mind. On Mondays he attended his Good Templars lodge, on Tuesday his trade union branch, on Wednesday the Primitives would meet for prayer or experience, Thursday was Miss Mary's night out, and together they would stroll away into the country, communing together. How truly does our great poet picture scenes like this!

And on her lover's arm she leant,
And round her waist she felt it fold,
And so across the hills they went
To that new world which is the old.

On Friday night there was generally a lecture or a political meeting, and Saturday would find the future legislator either going for a chapel picnic or, in the winter, to a football match.

In 1896 Mr Robinson found himself drawn into politics. A celebrated I.L.P. lecturer came to the town and spoke on the subject "Can a Man be a Christian on a Pound a Week?" Young Robinson was quick to see that working men must assert themselves in politics. He 'felt the call.' In a few years he found himself in great request. He would speak on "The Politics of the Saviour on the Mount," on "Christ the First Socialist," on "Give us this day our daily bread." Probably, however, his most celebrated lecture was that entitled "Heaven on Earth," in which he reached his highest flights of oratory. The rest of his public life is public property. His great victory in 1906, when he won Puddleborough for Labour and Progress, is still fresh in our memory.

Our worthy and respected M.P. has always set his face against those extremists who would transmogrify the Labour Party into a revolutionary body. On this point Mr Robinson holds strong convictions. When I recently broached the subject he grew very grave. "Forgive them, for they know not what they do," he said. I could see he was pondering deeply as he tapped the table with his fingers. In a minute or so, speaking very deliberately, he said: "I was much struck the other day by a remark made by our worthy chairman. 'Jack,' said he, 'depend upon it, that what we want is orderly progress.' That's it! Orderly progress. Now can any man say that

the French Revolution was orderly progress? Of course not. Matthew Keeling used to say: 'Here a little and there a little.' Isn't that true? Isn't it life? Mind you, I respect our Social Democratic friends. They are terribly in earnest and they read a lot of economics. Economics is not my strong point. The Sermon on the Mount is good enough for me. If I have the fear of God in my heart what do I want with economics? A soulless, godless thing. And I'm sorry to say it, but it's truth (and the truth shall set you free), these Social Democrats are at bottom enemies of religion. Take away our religion and where are we? It means chaos and anarchy. Besides, is it wise to antagonize our Nonconformist friends? Where should I be if the progressive forces of Puddleborough were split? The good old Book tells us to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. And what is true of religion must be true of politics, or else our religion must be a whited sepulchre—just that—a whited sepulchre. Depend upon it, nothing is gained by going too fast. Mind you—and don't forget to mention it—I don't say I'm satisfied. Far from it. These Social Democrats keep on telling me that wages aren't what they ought to be. That's a very difficult problem—very difficult. But do we make the best of our wages? Look at our drink bill and the wicked gambling that goes on. No, it's a very difficult problem. Suppose we get higher wages. Should we really be any better off? As long as I am a member of the Labour Party, I'll be no party to any movement that would undermine the morality of the working classes. These wild, revolutionary Socialists always talk as if employers were unworthy

of consideration. Let them come here for a session and they'll very soon discover their mistake. I meet many employers here, and I give you my word, they are wonderfully sympathetic. Let us have a better understanding between employers and workmen—that's good business and good Christianity—but I'm not in favour of turning things topsy-turvy."

I trust that next time the Tory Press denounces the Labour Party as a gang of Socialist conspirators they will bear in mind these wise words of Mr Robinson, who has always spoken sincerely and meant every word that he said.

Our Liberal and Nonconformist friends need have no fear that as long as our present worthy M.P. sits for Puddleborough there will be any danger of the Labour Party running amuck. In the main, it is composed of serious and religious men who will never consent to any wild revolutionary course. The Labour Party in Parliament has gained the respect of all parties in the House, nor will the wild cavorting of disgruntled Socialists ever force them one hair's-breadth from the pursuit of a policy which has gained for the Labour Party and its leaders the respect and esteem of the thoughtful and respectable elements of British society.

XXVII: A DEGRADED ECONOMY

MY DEAR GEORGE,

The Don Rodriguez duly appeared at his own chosen dinner and turned out to be a merry cricket. I could see, however, that under the cloak of the *farceur* is a body trained to endurance and a heart not easily daunted. Intellectually he is a Stoic, even if his habits indicated the gourmet. (The two attitudes are by no means mutually exclusive. A Stoic may be a man of good taste ; a man of good taste may be a gourmet.) He belongs to an old and clean-bred Spanish family of large estate. The President of this Sambo republic cut a big slice off their possessions. One of the brothers was charged with insurrectionary sympathies. The noble President, fearing the verdict, had him shot out of hand, and without further ceremony seized Naboth's vineyard. The Don is a young man. He has patience ; he can wait. He will surely remember.

Rafael had evidently told him that I was to be trusted, so our conversation was unrestrained. Undoubtedly, there is an insurrection on the Pacific slope, but it was agreed that it must fail. There is money ; there is enthusiasm ; there is anger at the memory of evil things done. But the army remains solid for the President, who has always judiciously pampered it. Rodriguez, with a sigh, said the movement was hopeless. " We must wait a better chance," he said.

" For the sake of Rodriguez, I hope it will come soon," said Rafael. " But, if successful, how will it mend matters ? "

“ It will feed revenge,” came the simple answer.

That is how things are out here. Politics is a fierce personal struggle. The only known political principle is Liberalism, and the President is its high-priest. It is curious that the word ‘ Liberal ’ has a special connotation in England, where it implies some generous impulse, some social compunction. But elsewhere (perhaps also in England) it is surely the most abominable creed ever devised. If you would be a master politician, you must thoroughly grasp the inner meaning of the vile thing and realize also that it is the most powerful force in world-politics. As Liberalism is understood out here, it is a combination of anti-clericalism with full liberty to exploit labour. It implies that the Government, backed by the exploiter, must leave the exploiter alone. It also implies that the exploiter must play fair with the Government. The ancient Catholic hegemony of Central America had at least a negative virtue : it would not permit its children to accumulate large profits for anybody save Mother Church. Of course, it did its own spoliation, to the glory of God. As *bourgeois* population and habits grew stronger, it is hardly surprising that a stern struggle ensued between the Church—mainly guided by Jesuits—and the trading classes for a fairer division of the spoils. Out of that struggle came the independence of the republics (their constitutions models of *bourgeois* morality), and the final expulsion of the Jesuits and other religious orders. Then followed the reign of the exploiter, who naturally had the Government in his pocket. Every insurrection that followed has been a grab, sometimes successful, at

power ; not for Liberty, but for plunder. And always their watchword was Liberalism.

The story of European Liberalism is in essence similar, but necessarily more subtly contrived. It had to give a greater content to the concept of liberty, and it squared the circle by drawing a sharp line between political and economic liberty. What you must understand is that, from its earliest days, Liberalism has been impregnated with economic motives. Its doctrine is simply this : that happiness comes through accumulation. When Adam Smith and the Physiocrats were propaganding, any interference by the State with money-making was deemed to be unnatural ; it was 'artificial.' The State must leave industry alone. Let it stick to its own last—the proper application of force against outside enemies and inside agitators, particularly those who form combinations 'in restraint of trade.' Possessing the economic power, they naturally had the political power. Need we wonder that they made a hell of Great Britain ?

They did more ; they performed a miracle, for they made our people proud of it.

I think I have remarked more than once that economic power dominates political theory and action. But that does not mean that political movements and methods are impotent or futile. If I buy a newspaper and pay an editor to expound my views, it by no means follows that no power inheres in his work and personality. It merely means that I can exercise power over him. In his turn, however, he exercises influence (which is power) over as many faithful readers as are attracted by his skill and

persuasion. So it is with politics. The power behind the throne is money ; but the power of politics is proved by the fact that Liberalism was able to enslave the population and yet make it proud of its liberty. Liberalism—essentially an economic movement—has commanded the ablest statesmen and politicians during the past century. Just think of them : Peel, Lord John Russell, Cobden, Bright, Gladstone. They were the bell-wethers ; they lured the flock to be sheared. Nor were they without their prophets and their sacred writings. Adam Smith, Quesnay, Turgot, Malthus, Ricardo, John Stuart Mill, Bastiat, with his discordant *Harmonies*, J. B. Say, Yves Guyot. Read them all : in their diversity you will find one harmonious strain—the liberty of the exploiter to exploit. Not once do you find a glimmer of the simple truth that the power to buy labour is the power to enslave.

Nothing grieved these gentry so much as the suggestion that the State might properly step in and protect the weak against the strong. Shaftesbury's agitation was before your time. In my youth, I heard its last echoes. I remember him as a very austere old man. His work was done, but he lived to see it as a buttress and not a curb upon Capitalism. I once watched him in church—went there to see him—and wondered whether he knew that he, more than any other man, had taught Capitalism how to hitch factory legislation to its own coach. He taught it that inhuman conditions do not pay ; that factory laws and regulations, properly conceived, improved the quality of labour and bound it more

securely to the wage-system. All was serenely well so long as you could buy labour at a market price and sell its product at a profit. The rest was leather and prunella. This had been the theme of all the State Socialists from Rodbertus to Webb. I remember as a young man advocating the eight-hours day because a man could produce more in eight hours' intensive work than in nine or ten hours' prolonged work. And I remember Sidney Webb proving to our satisfaction that the Factory Acts were a blessing, because they had transformed the shoddy trade into a profitable, and therefore a respectable, industry. Competitive confusion had given way to regulation. It had become imperative, not in the interests of the workers, but of the profiteers. Within the bounds of wagers, State interference is good for the worker and better for the capitalist. It is merely one aspect of the economy of high wages. More corn in the belly, more work in the shafts.

But what an ideal! All the sanctities of life, *les longs espoirs et les vastes pensées*, reduced to the measure of money and commodities. It is not a political economy, but a degraded philosophy. When, then, did it take the wrong turning? I believe in its definition and appreciation of 'value.' Take Adam Smith. Of course you learnt in the schools his distinction between 'value in use' and 'value in exchange,' afterward so effectively developed by Marx. In either alternative, value resides in an inanimate thing. Ricardo argued that value is determined by the cost of production. Again, value resides in the thing produced. Marx

carried Ricardo's theory a step farther. "All value is the product of labour." Again value in the thing. All the economists are agreed on that point. Granted the premise, I suppose it logically follows. But how if we do not grant the premise? Suppose we say to Adam Smith, to Ricardo and to Marx: "Gentlemen, behind your definitions there is something you fail to mention—to wit, human life. Have you nothing to say about that? Consider! Human life goes into the production of a necklace and into the supply of water. It goes into the production of *pâté de foie gras*, but it also goes into the scavenging of our streets. Please don't fob me off with some futile reply about effective demand or human life being the common denominator—I know all about that. Please tell me whether you have any gauge to the intensity of life, to its quality, its distribution. Have you ever measured your commodities by the natural demand for them? Oh! you are not moralists, aren't you? Then why do you call yourselves *political* economists? Let me tell you that political economy involves morals. If it does not, then you are mere counting-house pen-pushers. But it certainly does involve morals, as I can prove in a trice. Thus, in your various definitions of value, how do you distinguish between slavery and wagery? You tell me it is a purely economic distinction. But how? Greater productivity under wagery. Why, good sirs? The higher status produces a higher standard of wealth production and consumption. Ah! then you can't escape after all from an inquiry into the quality of life!"

Being neither a dreamer nor an impossibilist, I

recognize that the political economists have done their best with their available material. I am grateful to them ; they interest me immensely. Please don't run away with the notion that I regard them as capitalistic pimps. I don't ; even though they lay themselves open to the imputation. They were all of them exceptionally good and kindly men. But how could they help taking on the colour of their environment ? Quite literally, none of them knew anything about life. To them it was a thing of abstractions and phantoms. Nevertheless, if I find another man's hand in my pocket, and a saintly old gentleman standing by and applauding the act as sound political economy, he won't escape on the score of his unblemished reputation. He will be charged as an accessory.

I had written the foregoing while Rafael and Don Rodriguez were closeted on urgent affairs. Rodriguez came to bid me adieu and gaily rode away, looking a very gallant gentleman. Rafael asked me what I had been doing, so I told him of this tedious screed to you.

" It is odd," he remarked, " that the new school don't look up Sismondi. They idolize Saint-Simon, or Fourier, or Owen, or Marx. Why do they forget Sismondi ? "

" Hanged if I know. Why should they ? "

" Well, you know, he gave the orthodox crowd some deuced uncomfortable *quarts-d'heures*. And he anticipated your theory about life values regarded in the economic sense. Read his *Nouveaux Principes*. You will find there that he objected *au fond*

to the aim of orthodox political economy. To them, it was the science of material wealth ; to him the real object of the science should be man, or at the very least the physical well-being of man. For the economists to forget man was a sure way to make a false start. It is the very beginning of his argument. I'll write down two sentences for your charming nephew : ' The accumulation of wealth, *in abstracte*, is not the aim of government, but the participation by all its citizens in the pleasures of life which the wealth represents. Wealth and population in the abstract are no indication of a country's prosperity ; they must in some way be related to one another before being employed as the basis of comparison.' Tell your nephew to put that in his pipe and smoke it."

"I will, by Jove ; and if he reads it to the Professor of Political Economy, he'll drop down dead."

"Worse things might happen."

"An alert Press could make great game of it. Imagine the heading : ' Death of a Professor from shock on discovering a human political economy.' How did Sismondi apply it ? "

"By laying great stress on distribution. I dare say his argument was all wrong. He wrote in the early part of last century, you know. But I like him because as an economist and an historian he had compassion for those who suffer from trade crises. The invention of new machinery, the freedom of competition, and all the other stock-in-trade of the Liberals made him furious, because they had no compunction for those who suffered during the transition. To him, political economy, broadly

conceived, is a theory of goodwill, and any theory that in the final analysis does not increase the happiness of mankind does not belong to the science at all. Doubtless he was hopelessly wrong-headed, but I like him for it. His work is full of good things. You know the old argument about the spontaneous rearrangement of society following increased mechanical production. Sismondi jumps on it with both feet. He flourishes his fist ; he shouts in his anger. 'Show more regard for men and less for machinery' is his indignant cry. 'Let us desist from our habit of making abstraction of time and place. Let us take some account of the abstracts and the friction of the social mechanism. The immediate effect of machinery is to throw some of the workers out of employment, to increase the competition of others, and so to lower the wages of all.' "

"Of course, he admits that a certain equilibrium is re-established in the long run, but only after frightful suffering. And, *ex hypothesi*, suffering is uneconomic. Then, again, he spotted the waste involved. Competition has induced women and children to bear the burden of production instead of adults. Cheapness, in such circumstances, is useless. The meagre advantage enjoyed by the public is more than counterbalanced by the loss of health and vigour of the workers."

"By the same token, and apart from material results, woman in industry is uneconomic."

"I dare say it is. We instinctively hate the idea of our women living bedraggled lives in factories."

"Thanks for telling me about Sismondi. George Moore showed his intense love for the Irish language by making his nephew learn it. That's the kind of vicarious learning that suits me. I'll make my nephew stew up Sismondi. But a dreadful doubt oppresses me. These historical writers are nearly all pure inductionists. Deduction for me! When a man says that his experience leads him to conclude that economic law is moonshine, I back that law without hesitation. We must have the abstract before we can distil the truth."

"Poor Tony! Orthodox and doesn't know it!"

"Perhaps and perhaps not. But, after all, there is more science in the classical than in the social-economic school. I prefer to build on the classical. There is less to reject and a vast deal more can be added. If I were a theologian, I would choose the Catholic and not the Baptist theology. The one may be right in this or that particular, but the other has the broad sweep and encompasses the living issues—such as they are."

"And the deuce of a lot more inertia."

"True; that is our problem."

"I doubt if it is really a problem. Take the commonly accepted emotional Socialism—the ethical stuff. I remember that the Socialists were never tired of proclaiming it to be the very essence of Christianity, and the Church rejected the claim. The Socialists fought their way into a sentimental popularity, and now the Church asserts that it is the one and only Socialist body. In like manner—touch wood!—if you were to go for a scientific study of human life as the greatest economic factor, the

classical fellows would first laugh at you, and finally assert that you exactly express their sentiments. The fact is that all the inexact sciences are more or less humbug. The wise thing is not to be bull-dozed by them."

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

XXVIII: BREEDING, BLOOD, AND PIRACY

MY DEAR GEORGE,

My visit to Placentia ended suddenly. Once again a horse and rider clattered over the cobbled stones of the *patio*, and once again Rafael's practised ear detected the stranger. Smith announced a messenger to see me. Hard on his heels entered Boyle, the beaming constable who keeps watch and ward over our little district. I was naturally astonished. "What brought you here, Boyle?" I asked. "The Attorney-General, sir, sent me with this." He handed me a letter.

"After all, I shall want your evidence in the piracy case. Would you kindly come quickly?"

"Yours as ever,

"L. TALBOT."

I handed the note to Rafael, who broke into loud laughter. "Tony! Tony! Little did I think that any friend of mine would ever be involved in a piracy case. I am greatly distressed. Really, you know, you don't dress the part. You look much too benevolent."

"What do looks matter? I knew a parson in my young days. With his surplice and other trimmings on he looked positively angelic. He could have married any woman in the congregation. Butter wouldn't melt in his mouth. But he never missed a prize-fight."

"York Powell knew more about the ring than any other man. Anyhow, you mustn't change the subject. Tell me how you became a pirate."

“The story began thirty years ago, when Nick Murphy, a rapsallion Irish sailor, deserted his ship at Belize. He was a big-chested, powerful man, a drunkard, a gambler, and a swashbuckler. He worked at practically every kind of job, earning good money. Then he would let out and paint the town red. He finally found himself stranded at Stann Creek. Here he met a mulatto woman, Isabel Burgos. She must have been physically enticing. Even now, her body is supple and her movements are lithe. She works on my estate, washes, cooks, and makes coco-nut oil. Isabel’s father was white and her mother half white. Isabel’s colour is light mahogany. The mother had some property worth, perhaps, two thousand dollars. Nick wanted the woman, and she wanted Nick. But the mother stood guard. ‘If you want my daughter, you marry her,’ she said. Nick didn’t want to marry, but he wanted Isabel. ‘Put down five hundred dollars, ye ould skinflint, and I’ll take her to church.’ So the bargain was struck.

“Nick bought a mule and cart with part of the money and started a ‘blind tiger’ with the balance. Oddly enough, he became sober, and having saved some money and made himself popular, obtained a licence. Then he added a three-quarter billiard-table and a dancing-hall to his stock. Three children were born, the oldest a boy, and two girls. Then Nick’s affections began to wander. His wife was jealous and their life became a little hell. One night Nick turned his wife and children out of the home acquired with her money. A day or two later another coloured woman was installed. There were

endless police court proceedings for alimony, for assault, for brawls. Finally, the D.C. got sick of the whole Murphy *ménage* and told them to begone and not to bother him any more. The result was that the woman failed to get alimony, and Nick was left in peace with his concubine. To continue the parental story, Isabel joined a buck nigger, while Nick changed his women every year. He died recently, leaving thirty thousand dollars and twenty-nine children. As he lay dying, Isabel rubbed her hands in gleeful anticipation. 'When he die, sir, we get his money. He bad man. It is good he die.' 'You can't get any of it, Isabel, because you have been living with Ezekiel and having children by him.' 'No matter, sir, his children lawful. They get it. I glad if they get it. I no matter. I live on little bread and tea. But when he die, then Jim he buy Navarro's sloop. Jim he always want sail his own boat.' Isabel's brown eyes light up with mother pride at the thought of her boy Jim sailing his own boat. I laugh. 'Why, Isabel, you must have been very pretty when Nick married you.' Isabel laughs too. 'Not so bad, sir.'

"A time came when Nick Murphy's fires abated and he longed for permanence and comfort at home. As money came, there came to him a sense of that racial pride he had so long forgotten. Just then, so Fate decreed, Juanita Carillon crossed his path. Her husband, a drunken brute, had behaved after his kind. Juanita may have the negro strain in her, but she is practically a white woman. Nick found her one night sleeping on the sand under her husband's house. He said to her: 'You have had

enough ; I have had enough ; come to me, Nita.' So she went to Nick and they were happy. She rejoiced in the security of his strong arm ; he at last knew something of home comforts. Moreover, she helped him in the shop and watched carefully over his interests. He dressed better than ever before, and walked more confidently in the company of white men. Then he wounded his foot on a rusty nail. He and she doctored it together. He liked her nursing, revelling in the unaccustomed feminine touches. But neither realized that the foot was growing worse. Finally, they called in the doctor. 'Gangrene, you fool ; why didn't you tell me a month ago ? Your foot must come off.' Juanita wept bitterly, for she felt guilty. 'If I'd been black, you'd have got the doctor at first ; you trusted me because I was white.' 'Never mind, Nita ; I'll just get the foot off. Keep things going till I come back.' Nick felt strangely happy in comforting his white woman. Had she been one of the earlier ones he would have kicked her about the room with his sound foot. So he sailed away to the Belize Hospital, where they amputated his foot, the surgeon remarking upon the shortage of blood.

"For a day or two Nick lay thinking of his new life. The doctor examined the leg anxiously, for there were disquieting symptoms. On the third day he told Nick that he must amputate at the knee ; the gangrene was showing on the side of the shin. Weeks ran into months. They kept on nibbling at his leg. The last time Nick felt nothing and there was no blood. 'It's hopeless, Nick. We've done our best. I fear you must prepare for the worst.'

Then Nick thought of Isabel and their children lawfully begotten. They were his own, bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh. And it was Isabel's money that had started him. So he sent for the three children, who looked at him as upon a stranger. He saw himself mirrored in the boy. But all three were uncouth, uneducated, incapable of sympathy or understanding. He shook hands with his son and kissed his daughters, who perfunctorily responded. He felt relieved when they sidled out of the room. Juanita hastened to the side of her dying man. She caressed him, sitting for hours fondling his hand, finally breaking out into a torrent of self-reproaches and passionate words of gratitude. When night came the nurses led her gently away. Nick sent for the lawyer and made his will, leaving everything to Juanita. Two days later they buried him.

"From his earliest days Jim Murphy, son of Nicholas, although brought up among coloured children, was taught to believe that he belonged to the dominant white race. His skin was white, his hair soft and brown. There was not a kink in it. He would watch the District Commissioner riding past. He could not put it into words, but he would think, 'You and I belong.' The Customs officer was creole. Jim would look at him and say to himself: 'Huh! He was born here. My father was born in Ireland, and that's as good as England.' When he saw 'proper' white children, he would dream of the day when they would play with him as with a brother. But they would go away to New Orleans or Mobile, or even to England to be educated. And all the time he seemed to be drawn deeper and

deeper into the black, servile mass. There was no school for him. He went to work in a Spaniard's warehouse, and, when he had grown to his father's stature, he became a mahogany cutter, a teamster, finally being left in charge of my coco-nut walk. He was given a cottage, and Stella, a black wench, went to live with him.

"I think that what most weighed with him was the fact that he was legitimate. It is not much to have a white father. Black women like white men to give them children. 'It lightens the colour,' they say, and make no claim. But Jim was born in wedlock, and that made all the difference. So he nursed the hope that some day he would live a white man's life, perhaps marry a white woman. His mother and sisters did not like his Stella affair. 'You are white; do as the whites do,' they would say to him. Jim sometimes saw his father, after Juanita had made him dress well. Jim did not feel the irony of it; he was pleased that his father walked in fine linen. He felt a reflected radiance; it kept alive his pride of race. 'I am not black, I am white,' was his constant thought.

"So it came about that, as the gates of death closed upon Nicholas Murphy, the doors of heaven opened to the enraptured gaze of James Murphy, his son lawfully begotten. Father and son were for a moment lifted out of the common herd that they might together touch tragedy. Heaven seemed assured when Nicholas shook hands with Jim. 'He is dying; the property will soon be mine,' said Jim, swimming on a wave of jubilant triumph. He built castles in Spain as he waited the lawyer's summons.

“Be sure that bad news travels swift to pain or to dismay. Three days after Nick’s burial Isabel rushed, breathless, into Jim’s cottage. ‘He has left everything to that woman,’ she sobbed, wiping her eyes with her petticoat. Jim could not say anything ; he was very slow of speech. He clenched his fists and felt as though he were falling into the void. Shaken and irresolute, he looked out on the sea. A gentle south-easter roughened the glinting waters. ‘I’m going to Stann Creek to see about it,’ he said, his eyes glowering in pain and anger. So he put some food and clothes into his ‘patkey,’ walked down to the shore, where waited, ever ready, his sailing dory. Isabel kissed him good-bye. In a minute he was on the water, sail and jib set, his hand with sure touch on the rudder. His last glimpse was of Isabel, again with petticoat to weeping eyes, and Stella standing at the cottage door, impassive, uncomprehending.

“A few minutes after landing at Stann Creek Jim met Vicente Flores, prize-fighter, scamp, cut-throat, but withal plausible and intelligent. They went into Murphy’s saloon to drink rum. Jim paid for it. ‘It ought to be yours,’ said Vicente, leering, provocative. ‘Sure,’ said Jim. ‘I’m going on a proper voyage,’ said Vicente. ‘Where to?’ asked Jim. ‘Barrios, Cortez, Tela, and Truxillo.’ ‘Some trip,’ said Jim. ‘We’re going on the motor sloop *Isabel*.’ ‘My mother’s name,’ said Jim. ‘It ought to be your mother’s boat ; old Nick owned it. Brought in on it many a keg without paying duty. Now it belongs to Juanita. Damned shame, I say.’ ‘Sure,’ said Jim. For some hours did Jim and

Vicente pour rum down their throats and money into gentle Juanita's lap. She would come in and out of the saloon, behind the bar, furtively watching the unhappy but stolid Jim, her dead man's lawful son, born in holy wedlock, with the Church's blessing. Juanita, pious in her own way, felt uneasy. The sight of Jim got on her nerves. One moment she wanted to scream ; another, she felt an impulse to offer a share to the disinherited. But she did nothing, and Jim's last chance floated down the wind.

"That night, on the bridge over the river where it flowed across the bar into the sea, the mast-light of the *Isabel* twinkling out beyond the shoal, Vicente proposed to Jim that he should join the boat. 'We can do some trading on our own,' he said. 'Besides, we're taking a rich old man and his woman. You bet we can do something with him.' 'Sure,' said Jim, innocent of any sinister intent. Early next morning Vicente and Jim were busy at the store buying things to barter, or on the boat making ready, taking in luggage and provisions, and tuning up the engine. At eight o'clock old Ricardo d'Almeida and his French creole woman, Josephine, came aboard. The dory was hoisted, the anchor weighed, and Jim went unresisting to his fate.

"For nearly two days the *Isabel* (under sail to save the gasoline) glided down the coast, past 'Dead Man's Point' and 'Pirate Cay,' with a light but fair wind. Most of the time Jim and Vicente lounged or slept in the bow, occasionally stirring to luff or haul closer. Josephine sat in a deck-chair, sometimes snoozing and waking to trill a French song. Ricardo passed the time reading a Spanish aphrodisiacal

novel, his gimlet eyes now and then casting a glittering glance at Josephine, comparing her charms with the heroine's. At length, impatient of slow progress, he spoke roughly to Vicente, ordering him, with an oath, to start the engine. Vicente rose indolently and went below. Soon came the thug-thug of cylinder and piston, speed obtained at the expense of silence. I like to think that what followed was done in hot and not cold blood. Some words, rough or smooth, passed between the old man and the young ruffian. In an instant, before Jim had realized it, Vicente struck Ricardo a blow which stunned him. Jim rushed aft, raised the old man's head and laved his brow with water out of a cup that stood on the cabin's poop. Josephine, thoroughly frightened, grew hysterical. Ricardo soon revived. Vicente's prize-ring experience had taught him to avoid half-measures. With quick decision he roped Ricardo's legs, tying the hands behind the back. Josephine, on her deck-chair, shrieked, laughed, and wrung her hands. The old man finally struggled to his knees, begging mercy. Jim, slow of thought and inarticulate, now became Vicente's pliant instrument. Fury lurked in Vicente's eyes; his arms and hands twitched, oaths and imprecations flowed torrential from his lips. He suddenly grew silent, piercing Ricardo with a look of concentrated hatred. Ricardo, still on his knees, trembling, terrified, alternately begged mercy and called upon God to save him. Then Vicente drew his knife from the leather sheath attached to his belt and cut Ricardo's throat with a great gash, the blood spurting over the deck. 'The second anchor,' shouted Vicente. Jim

rushed forward and brought it. Vicente knelt down and lashed it to the legs of the dying man. 'Now, over with him.' Jim, in hypnosis, helped, and Ricardo's last home was the sea, literally at safe anchorage.

"As the dead body sank, the hysterical Josephine swooned. Vicente looked at her, frowning. 'Now for the old bitch,' he said. But something was stirring in Jim. Vaguely, he knew that it is against the white man's code to kill women. There flashed across his mind memories of white men, with whom he had hoped some day to mix. He knew what they would think of killing a defenceless woman—they who guarded their women, even to death. And he was white, while Vicente was an Indian. 'Come on, man, quick,' called Vicente. 'No,' replied Jim. 'God damn it, man, we must, or she'll split on us.' Jim had no answer to this, so remained silent. 'I'll do it by myself,' said Vicente. 'No,' said Jim, stepping over to the prostrate woman. 'Why not?' asked Vicente. 'I'm white,' said Jim, his face stolid, sullen, determined. Vicente went down into the cabin and stopped the engine. Up above, Jim drew his machete and waited. In a minute or two Vicente returned. 'All right,' said he, 'but what shall we do with her?' 'Dunno,' said Jim. 'Let's put her ashore on one of these cays. We can get away before she can do anything.' 'Yes,' said Jim. When Josephine became conscious Vicente told her they would spare her life, but she must be put ashore. So said, so done. Jim and Vicente were masters of the *Isabel*.

"On examining Ricardo's effects they found about

two thousand gold dollars and some jewels. Everything else they weighted and threw overboard. They entered Barrios harbour under power. Oddly enough, their papers were found to be correct. The strain relaxed, they soon made the money spin on liquor, gambling, and women. Then, one evening, Vicente told Jim that a woman had been rescued from a cay. 'We've got to get,' he said. They made for the open sea, and for weeks sheltered among the cays (islands). Finally, money and food all gone, they discussed plans. 'We must sell the boat,' said Vicente; 'who'll buy it?' 'The Chief,' said Jim. Thus, one morning, Jim and Vicente walked up to my house to offer me a motor sloop for five hundred dollars. I declined, knowing Vicente of old. The police soon raised the hue and cry, Jim and Vicente were arrested and the boat seized.

"Jim will stand in the dock and Juanita will give evidence against him. Because Jim was suddenly conscious of his white blood and saved the woman we will hang him—to uphold the law and teach all niggers a lesson."

Not once did Rafael interrupt. I think he was a little moved by my recital.

"That story certainly began thirty years ago," he said. "You ought to write it out for the benefit of your political nephew. It has some bearing, I fancy, on heredity and environment."

"It's the deuce of a long story to write. *Hélas!* I must be going. Had a ripping time. I will always connect you with the song of the husband-man."

“What’s that ? ” asked Rafael.

“Somewhere in the Bible :

“ ‘The hay is carried

And the tender grass sheweth itself,

And the herbs of the mountain are gathered in.

The lambs are for thy clothing,

And the goats are the price of the field :

And there will be goats’ milk enough for thy food,

For the food of thy household ;

And maintenance for thy maidens.”

“It sounds like a benediction,” said Rafael.

“Let it be one, with all my heart,” I answered.

We stepped down to the *patio*. My horse, Paddy, pawed impatiently. I tested his belly-band and mounted, while Rafael patted his neck. Then our hands clasped. In a few minutes we were plunging down the winding road.

And so home.

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

XXIX: RICHARD TUDOR

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I enclose Richard Tudor's letter, as promised. I expect it will seem remote and altogether irrelevant to political life as you knew it prior to the war. I regard it as an historic document. Please keep it carefully. It is one of many papers in my possession which might prove extremely interesting to the next or some future generation. If I were a literary gent I could earn some more or less honest guineas by throwing them together in book form, with those harmless comments and annotations which are deemed to be *de rigueur* in that class of literature.

Prescience and sympathy are essential to recognize genuinely historic documents. We are told that this Prime Minister or that Foreign Secretary or some President of some republic has added to his fame by writing a classic State paper. There have been several hundreds of them in my own recollection. But the years cover them with silent dust; they become mere stones in an edifice of precedent. No doubt they served their turn, bringing great *kudos* to their authors. But historic? No. They are not historic because they are political, and, therefore, transient—artificial, and, therefore, transient. A genuinely historic document must first and last be penetrated with truth and sincerity; it must be artless, written without affectation or for effect. Such documents are locked away in old strong boxes in ancient castles and manor-houses—a letter from a lord to his lady, old estate accounts, tradesmen's bills, confidential letters that utter thoughts too

subversive to publish, or tell of events apparently trivial but often of incalculable significance. We know the legal relations between the various classes of English society from Magna Charta to the Insurance Act. But we do not know the actual personal, the psychological relations that have subsisted in feudalism and the large industry. That is a much too subtle task for Dryasdust. The really historic documents are precisely those that formal history rejects.

I have been too much behind the scenes to be deluded by formal records and papers. He is a fool who is so deluded, for they are almost invariably false in essence. It is a safe rule to regard suspiciously every hierarchical document. Depend upon it, the more persuasive it seems, the less reliable it is in fact. Am I then a disillusioned old cynic? Not in the very least. I have merely learnt the simple lesson (too simple for clever folk) that the facts of life and, therefore, history, are found in the thoughts and hopes and daily tasks of the mass of the population. The voice of the people is not the voice of God, but it is the voice of history. Before it the walls of Jericho totter and fall. To be disillusioned is the first step toward salvation; but I cannot be a cynic, because I have more than once entered into the sanctuary of living truth. I have been present at the birth of the commonplace, that most miraculous and most powerful agency in true historic development. Cynicism is much too cheap for one who has experienced the rich simplicity of ordinary life. Give me Millet, and let who will have Watteau.

Do you think that the commonplace is dull? It is the unusual, the perverse, that is dull. I have

been among clever people, the so-called Bohemians, the academicals, the politicals, the rebels, and all the rest of the epigrammatic quidnuncs. Their lives are dreadful—a strained extravaganza, tiresome and exhausting. Tell me, what do you think of a man or woman who frankly confesses to be always in search of new sensations? Life to them is dull. There can be no other explanation. Perhaps you will say that they have found the ordinary, the commonplace, so dull that they seek something more exciting. Idiots! If life punched them in the ribs, they would look for it in the moon. From time to time, I have told you stories of ordinary, commonplace men and women out here. Have my stories been dull? Then God help you—or me.

I am forgetting Tudor's letter. I think it conforms to my definition. Tudor was the cleverest man I ever met, but he knew that truth and the real struggle that lifts us beyond the level of the brute are to be found only in the universal, in that vast expanse of average experience that surges all around us, that breaks in upon us with tidal force, from which we cannot escape. How foolish for clever men to deny its existence! how fantastic when they refuse to plunge in! Yet London, Paris, New York, and all our 'intellectual centres' are covered, as with flies, by these creatures who think that the earth is dirty and average life inconsistent with the fastidious. Not so Tudor. I remember taking him to a mixed club in London. I could not say whether the dress or the conversation was the more exotic. We left early; Tudor's disgust would have broken bounds had we stayed.

"Tony, it doesn't deceive you, does it?" he asked.

I felt a little ashamed, for somehow I *had* been rather taken in. So I answered, shamefacedly: "It amuses me."

"How can anything so unreal and ugly amuse you? Come, step out; let's get some decent fresh air into our lungs. I do not think a brothel could be more depressing. What a croaking and creaking assembly of flatulent frogs! Did you hear that little ape trying to discuss the de Goncourts? It sickened me. He told me he was a realist. He never came within a mile of reality. But the women! Who was that dressy thing I spoke with? She dithered about sex-freedom."

As we walked he rolled a cigarette in his long, nervous fingers. I can see his sharply cut features as he lit a match, his lips curled in scorn and anger.

"You know we think in contrasts," he continued, "and Agnes Boraston came vividly to mind."

"A domestic tabby-cat," I remarked.

"If you will," he answered; "but let me tell you she's none the worse for that. Anyhow, I met her the other day and walked home with her. Her people are all political—Liberals and philanthropic. She runs something—a girls' club, I think. Sense of duty; but I bet you any money she does it well. We got talking about the local political crowd. 'A poor lot,' I said. 'Yes,' said she, 'in your sense, I agree; and in mine, too. They're never themselves; they're all masks and dominoes. I think that what we want is not so much great men as men—just men.' I was delighted. Fancy little Aggie touched by Carlyle. But, Lord! compare her with those club

vixens. No, damn it ! why should I insult her ? She's clean and sweet, and, if she marries a man and not a mask, she'll bear and train up clean, wholesome children."

Some scales fell from my eyes. Life !

And now I wonder if you will agree with me that Tudor's letter has some historic significance. It is not merely the cry of a stricken heart. It tells of what a young, cultured, and generous man—a gentleman, in short—felt and hoped and fought for when this century opened.

Your affectionate uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

[ENCLOSURE]

FUNCHAL, *October 12, 1904.*

DEAR TONY,

I found this place so delightful, so alluring, that I suddenly decided to stop off for a mail or two. As Brown found me dreamy or preoccupied, and found himself entangled with a *soi-disant* widow, with hair of a Bond Street colour unknown to me, I had no hesitation in giving him a miss. We shall meet later, either at Cape Town or Jo'burg—as he calls it. Meantime, the vine rows terraced up the mountain-side, the cattle lazily drawing the sleds over the cobbled streets, the quaint little shops selling obviously faked curios (mostly made in Birmingham), above all, the ever-changing face of the South Atlantic, reflecting the smiles or tears of God, have called me out of myself, and I begin to feel a peace that passes understanding.

I think nothing of the future, my present being too deliciously serene ; but I have reached one decision which is irrevocable. If and when I return, the movement shall know me no more. At the moment, it seems to leave my life empty. I do not doubt, however, that new interests—or hobbies : fancy me with a hobby !—will gradually fill the vacuum.

This decision is not the result of pique. The criminal revulsion to politics, bringing in its train the degradation of the spirit of the movement by which I set such store, hurt me more than I can tell. Indeed, I have felt something of the sorrow of Isaiah : “I shall go as in solemn procession all my years because of the bitterness of my soul.” But in these soothing surroundings, with brain and nerves smoothed out, and seeing affairs objectively, I now recognize that our efforts have been largely wasted because we have had no all-comprehensive formula, no spiritual talisman, to guide us in our ways. All our vaunted syntheses upon which we plumed ourselves prove to be the merest conjecture and speculation. One or two palpable facts prove this. For example, have you observed that our fellows in the game of politics have quite naturally resorted to the usual electioneering monkey tricks ? I never liked it, but until now never grasped its significance. It is surely evident that if we were veritably inspired by some great evangel, the majesty of its truth would call out a corresponding dignity in our conduct. As things are, what do we more than others ? Then, again, how easy is it for our so-called leaders to swing the movement into any side-track that happens to suit their book ! Take the Boer War.

Our attitude toward it ought surely to have been distinctive. We had nothing to say, so, like silly parrots, reproduced in our own jargon the arguments of *The Manchester Guardian*. The Fabian old gang pronounced for the nationalization of the goldfields. That rather attracted me at first. It seemed quite in our line. But on examination it is found to be moonshine. Apart from the palpable fact that the gang of capitalists who were strong enough to force war upon us were strong enough to hold what they had grabbed, short of confiscation, how would nationalization have helped the working gold-miners? Their wages would be fixed by market conditions and their bones and sinews continue to be exploited to pay interest on Consols instead of company shares. It is when I reach this point that I am frankly puzzled. If our existing system of industrial remuneration continues under Socialism, it leaves the status of the worker precisely what it was under Industrialism. It is somewhere in this direction that we must look for a fundamental change—not merely a change of employer from Private Stork to State Log. I do not see the way out ; I only wish I did.

No sooner are we quit of the South African mess than we find ourselves involved in the woman's suffrage crusade. The I.L.P. leaders are up to their necks in it. What in thunder has it got to do with us ? I heard a woman say : " I have no vote ; my gardener has." It struck me all of a heap—but not the way she expected. Who was she that she should speak of ' my ' gardener ? It looks as though slavery were not yet abolished. Why is not the

gardener his own man? Mind you, it is not a mere form of speech, as who would say 'my grocer' or 'my butcher.' She spoke of the gardener quite naturally and sincerely in the possessive sense. She meant: "This man belongs to me, body and bones. I keep him and maintain him. He is at my mercy. How preposterous, then, that he should have a vote while I haven't!" My answer disconcerted her: "Why, then, we must take steps to prevent you possessing a gardener." The more I think of it, the more clearly do I see that my answer inadvertently gets down to the roots of things. We are very fond of the epigram: "One man, one vote, good; one man, one job, better." Do we then mean "One woman, one job"? If we do, then count me out. That prospect, in a competitive wage-market, means hell. That Socialist leaders are beguiled into a movement such as this strengthens my conviction that our formulæ, or, if you will, our principles, sadly lack any vital relation to the facts of life.

Perhaps you will remark that I have been re-valuing my intellectual outfit. Why not? If one receives a great shock, it were surely foolish not to turn it to good account. What I wanted, I still want; but I perceive that I desired something infinitely greater than the Socialist movement has in it to give. Socialism is now reduced to an affair of party politics, coloured by a vague expectation that we can compel our bureaucracy to deal more humanely with labour than the present proprietors. It has altogether rejected any prospect of that economic revolution which so attracted you and me and scores like us. Materially, we are comfortable

enough ; but behind that thwarted revolution was a new spiritual vision, now blurred to all eternity. We shall go down to our graves with our hunger unsatisfied, with a dull ache at the heart, because what we loved has not stood the test. We invested it with qualities and beauties of which it was incapable. The awakening has been bitter ; but it is better now than later, when perhaps we could not easily have adapted ourselves to something worth while.

The political virus must, I suppose, work its way out. Until it does, believe me, we shall recede from rather than travel toward that new form of society for which we struggled. It is necessarily so ; it is the nature of the political man. I have been thinking of the various concrete things we put into our programme. We have completely deceived ourselves in believing that difficult technical problems could be solved by any kind of political effort. In spirit and conception we are all hopelessly wrong about it. Take agriculture as an example. How glibly do we talk of land nationalization ! The term is meaningless. All our talk has been of the form nationalization should assume. You and I have together worked out a new heptarchy, under which we were to marry town and country. I do not modify my views on that ; the scheme is logical, and, as far as it goes, good. We have even forced the Fabians to swallow it, notwithstanding underhand opposition. But none of us has had the true feeling for the land. It happens that I have had some thoughts of working one of my farms instead of renting it. So I packed one or two books on practical agriculture. Now read this. It is in the preface to a book on Soils :

“ This marvellously thin layer of a few inches or a very few feet that the farmer knows as ‘ the soil ’ supports all plants and all men, and makes it possible for the globe to sustain a highly developed life. Beyond all calculation and all comprehension are the powers and the mysteries of this soft outer covering of the earth. We do not know that any vital forces pulsate from the great interior bulk of the earth. For all we know, the stupendous mass of materials of which the planet is composed is wholly dead, and only on the veriest surface does any nerve of life quicken it into a living sphere. And yet from this attenuated layer have come numberless generations of giants of forests and of beasts, perhaps greater in their combined bulk than all the soil from which they have come ; and back into this soil they go, until the great life principle catches up their disorganized units and builds them again into beings as complex as themselves.

No doubt, all self-evident, but have you or I or any of the politicals that *feeling* for the land, that sense of awe, of reverence, evinced by this writer ? To him it is almost a divine thing. To rob it is like robbing God. Again I quote : “ The man who owns and tills the soil owes an obligation to his fellow-men for the use that he makes of his land ; and his fellow-men owe an equal obligation to him to see that his lot in society is such that he will not be obliged to rob the earth in order to maintain his life. . . . We shall reach the time when we shall not allow a man to till the earth unless he is able to leave it at least as fertile as he found it.” His last words please me immensely : “ I wait for good politics and good

institutions to grow out of the soil. I wait for the time, also, when we shall have good poetry and good literature developing from subjects associated with the soil ; for we want good literature to appeal to all men." How puerile, how futile do all our politico-mechanical schemes of land nationalization sound when confronted with this practical man, who not only has the skill to work the soil, but the imagination to see its meaning to the sons of men ! Perhaps, after all, we have gone the wrong way to work. Why not organize a great agricultural fraternity or guild ? It occurs to me that possibly other men have a similar feeling for their own 'craft and mystery.' If so, why not other self-governing fraternities ? I admit, however, that I am gravelled by the problem of adequate remuneration. I can only pray that light shall come in God's good time.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that 'our cause, pure, passionate,' has taken a wrong turn. Politics bores me stiff. You and I know what it is locally ; I suspect that it is very much the same thing at the centre, the only difference being that our local men play with penny chips and the head centre men with sovereign counters. Even if it were desirable to play the political game, our poor little ineffective leaders, who shiver at ha'penny nap, would stand no chance against the other party leaders. From the outset we should be doomed. I have met practically all the Socialist leaders—most of them have been my guests—and sorrowfully affirm that when they are not eaten up with conceit, they are only good-natured boys, pleased with a rattle, tickled with a straw. So I step down and out. Adieu !

For all your good comradeship I can only offer you my eternal gratitude. You haven't taken things so seriously as I have. You have always had outside interests, and I have rather feared your diabolical sense of humour. But you have always backed me, and never more strongly than when you knew I was making a fool of myself. We have had some gorgeous times together.

Yours as ever,

RICHARD TUDOR.

XXX: THE RETURN OF THE NATIVE

MY DEAR GEORGE,

You remember the Horatian peasant who waited for the river to flow past :

*Rusticus exspectat, dum defluat amnis, at ille
Labitur et labetur in omne volubilis ævum !*

Perchance he had before seen only a mountain stream that runs dry after the rain has ceased. But if life flows like water, its supply at the source is not *in omne volubilis ævum*. Sooner or later, the ominous fact strikes at the heart that the source of our life is no longer replenished ; that it flows steadily, but in decreasing volume, to be finally merged in the open sea. I have had, for some months, a suspicion that I too was bound on this last voyage across the bar. So, on the spur of the moment, I decided to return home, to find Nurse at her old corner near the kitchen fire, babbling of her boy suddenly called to Serbia on stern duty.

They tell me that psychology plays a big part nowadays in medicine, and I can very well believe it. On this hypothesis, I concluded that only an Irish physician would understand the psychology of an Irishman. I dare say the argument is a little forced ; but I wanted to visit my old village playmate, Michael Barry, now a knight, the dean of his faculty and Dublin's leading consultant. Accordingly, I went over, and was soon in Micky's private room.

" It's glad I am to see ye, Tony Now have ye come because of me beautiful eyes ? " he said.

"I wanted sore to see you again, Mick, but I came because of my sinful heart."

"Bad cess to ye, didn't I warn ye against smokin' those strong cigars? Now strip—coat, waistcoat, shirt, vest."

In a twinkling Micky was lost in the great physician. Sir Michael Barry proceeded gravely with his examination, jotting down notes, all his movements slow and deliberate. He told me a queer story in jerks, as though to distract my thoughts. It was of a man who was dead and didn't know it. A prosperous Birmingham manufacturer had a wife who was a medium. They had no children, but had practically adopted a nephew who was a sea-going apprentice. This boy had a chum who was apparently homeless. Accordingly, when they reached a home port, they would come to Birmingham. They sailed to Rio Janeiro on their last voyage together. The nephew was called Tom, and his chum Matt. About the time they should have been returning, Mrs Wilson, being in a trance—if that be the correct term—conveyed a startling message to the little coterie surrounding her. It was from Matt. "Cable over quickly," he pleaded; "they think I am dead and have put me in a big box with a lot of dead bodies. Tell them to come quickly and get me out." Imagine the horror of it, for they believed in these manifestations. So they cabled to Rio to the medical authorities there, asking for an inquiry and a report. In two days came the reply: "Matthew Ganlon died last Thursday; yellow fever. No possible risk of error."

"A most unhappy death," I remarked.

"The theory of it," said Sir Michael, "is that

where life is naturally tenacious, as would be the case here, consciousness inheres in the corpse beyond the average period."

"I have often wondered," I said, "why the Church ignores these spiritualistic phenomena. Any evidence pointing to the continuance of life after death surely strengthens the argument for immortality."

"No doubt ; but it destroys the whole theory of heaven and hell. The Church would have to reconstruct its theology."

"And a good job too. Speaking of life and death, what's your verdict, Micky ? "

He sat at his desk, twiddling a pencil, looking gravely at his case-book. Then his grey eyes met mine, and with an almost caressing accent he said :

"It's thumbs down, Tony."

"All right," said I, "I guessed it ; now I know it. How long do you give me ? "

"Soon. Any time."

"No sick palaver beforehand, eh ? "

"Euthanasia in a trice. Things always did come easy to you, Tony. Death will too."

"Not so easily as I sometimes pretended ; but I'm not kicking. To be in the literary fashion, I must quote the usual

I warm'd both hands against the fire of life ;
It sinks and I am ready to depart ! "

"Rotten psychology," said Micky. "The more one enjoys life, the less one wants to leave it. By the way, what shall we do to-night ? "

"The Kingstown boat for me. Home and solitude for the stricken."

"I have a bit of business to do in London meself."

"You're a fraud; you're afraid to let me travel alone."

"If ye think it, ye can pay me fare."

"If I pay the piper, I call the route."

"What would ye be at, anyway?"

"I thought, mebbe, we might take a look at the old place."

"All right," said Micky; "there's a train at three-thirty. I'll just ring up Pat Fleming to look after things."

He got Fleming on the telephone. Followed the inevitable Irish *blague*.

"Paddy, darlint, I'm called away suddint. I want ye to take hoults. . . .

"What do ye say? On the razzle? Me! Respect me grey hairs, ye divil's spawn . . .

"Goin' fishin'! God save the man! An' me with some of the loveliest cases, wantin' a man of janius. . . .

"Cigars, do ye say? Ye'll find a box in the top right-hand drawer. An' Paddy, in case ye forget, ye'll be givin' me lectures at the Hospital. . . .

"What do ye say? No notes? Is it a clever man like Pat Fleming who'd be wantin' notes? Tell them in simple and heartfelt language how ye cured yeself of the dhrink habit. . . .

"How long? I hate to tell ye. It may be for years and it may be for ever: oh, why wert thou silent . . ."

Fleming decisively rang off; he'd probably heard the words before in similar circumstances. Micky gave a grunt of satisfaction.

"Pat's a clever boy; but it takes a dale of

diplomacy to handle him. He'll succeed me. I'm getting on, Tony."

And so we came to Camlagh. In that shabby old house, its garden ill-kept or deserted, I was born. Down this sordid street, with its open drain, in charge of a brawny Irish girl, I had toddled and slipped and fallen. At the corner of the square still stood "M'Cormick's Emporium," long since passed into strangers' hands. Remained, too, Tom Lisburn's bakery, with cakes and sweets in the window. We went in to inquire. Yes, Tom was still alive. Could we see him? He was very old and feeble, but perhaps, if we would kindly mention our names . . . In a minute we stood before the old man, in his shabby-genteel parlour. "It's little Tony. An' Mick Barry. Micky, you and yours was Papists, and mebbe I treated you oncharitable. An' now ye're a great man in Dublin. An' you, Master Tony. I mind your father and mother this min-ute. I mind them marryin' in the Quakers. He was a good man, fearin' the Lord and walkin' in His ways. Whin I hard of his death, me ould eyes were salt wid tears. Ye've been in far counthries. But ye're no prodigal. If ye swore it, I wouldn't belave it. It's a swate lady yer mother was. I'm an ould man, just ditherin' and totherin' into me grave. An' ye must be goin'. God bless ye both for callin' on me." We went out into the square, silent, each with a catch in the throat. We turned down toward the mill, passing the schoolhouse, where your grandmother, from time to time, examined the children in Bible history, and told them

of martyrs for the faith, diluted from Foxe. We heard the whirl of the machinery and saw the office where your grandfather mingled business authority with Christian admonition, the culprits fearing his sermons more than his solemn threats. Even though the place had changed, grown older, like Tom Lisburn; even though the old spirit, the *genius loci*, had either fled or escaped us (we had sojourned across Jordan and mixed with Philistines)—yet, somehow, I felt a sense of possession and of belonging, I who walked about, a stranger among strangers. In the Quaker graveyard, with flat stones over them, rested uncles and cousins and distant relatives, while Micky's parents lay united under a great cross, with its *Requiescat in pace*, over beyond the granite quarry, in the Roman cemetery.

"Come," I said to Micky, "let's go away. It's our home, yet here we have no abiding habitation."

"I'm glad I came, if only for old Tom's blessing. It's queer how things stick in the memory. I once stole a cake off his counter. He seemed to forgive me, and without any tellin'."

"I suppose you confessed at the time, did a penance and got absolution."

"Divil a ha'porth! Father Murray would have taken me straight to Tom and I'd have got a lam-basting."

"Do you know, Micky, that in my heart of hearts I was doubtful whether I ought to play with you. Papists are dangerous, and the Scarlet Lady might have got me."

"Ye arrogant little heretic! But, man dear, I liked bein' with ye; it gave me a great sense of

respectability. I think me father was the only Catholic in the district with more than sixteen shillin's a week."

"Arrogant is the word. It always seemed to me that it was part of your religion to be poor and shabby. My parents took me over to a little seaside place in England. There were twenty shop windows bigger than M'Cormick's. It was entrancing. Then some shabby little urchins collected round me. I thought they must be Catholics. They talked to me but couldn't understand my brogue. I was deeply offended, so, drawing myself up to my full three feet six, I said: 'Look here, young fellows, me lads, I'll have ye to know that I'm a Protestant Ulsterman!' They shrieked with laughter. I think that was my first lesson in democracy."

"There's more democracy in Ireland than in England, but more petty thieving," said Micky.

"How so?" I asked.

"In big business cheatin' is futile and out of place. The industrial system may be wrong—I don't like it—but ye must play fair. One can't afford the time to cheat. Look at the big stock and merchandise exchanges. Nearly everything done by word of mouth and hardly a dispute. We're overrun by a *petite bourgeoisie* which niggles at farthings and cheats in ha'pennies. The worst thing ye can see in Ireland this day is a village trader hagglin' with a peasant over bacon and eggs. Each knows the other is lying and cheating. I'm a Home Ruler—every self-respectin' Irishman is—but we'll have to clear away a mass of moral rubbish out of our hearts and shops, as well as ascendancy out of Dublin Castle."

“ They like ^{the} haggling.”

“ That’s the worst of it. Why should they like playin’ with lies and meanness? The same spirit colours Church life and politics and marriage.”

“ What’s your cure? ”

“ I’d like the big heart of the great industry without its bad health.”

“ Its bad health! What do you mean? ”

“ Would ye rather live a hundred years with a low vitality or fifty as a strong man ready to run a race? ”

“ Better fifty years of lustiness than a cycle of low health.”

“ We’re hearin’ all the time of the reduction of the death-rate. It’s true enough. But it takes no count of life intensity. Industrial England doesn’t know the meanin’ of the term. Ginger’s no longer hot in its mouth.”

We left our birthplace, never to return. For a brief space we had been simple-minded, emotional Irish lads, unconscious of the great world, where men struggle with realities and bogeys, where new ideas shake communities, changing their idols, amid clamour and tumult. Behind us were the Lisburns, secure in the old faiths, as unchanging as Mount Camlagh, that rosesheer out of the lake, linking up with Slieve Gallion, upon whose summit Finn MacCumhal fought with Cuchulain, dealing him a deathly blow with that great boulder that stands there, a lasting monument to his prowess and giant strength. We entered again the great world, of which we were citizens, yet conscious of its cold indifference. If human affection be the supreme end, how unwise to

leave this little place, where men and women, undistracted by 'problems,' have time to minister to each other, with a vivid sense that they are members of one family! The lights of Greenore faded out of sight. Micky made me turn into my bunk. I slept uneasily, oppressed with a feeling that I was a deserter and had gained precious little by it. . . . The clangour of the train released my thoughts, which, in the solitude of the noise, travelled to far horizons, envisaging that unknown future which may be no future, where time is not.

Thus, by a momentary whim, I had come back to my beginning, and in memory travelled the full circle of my wayward life, now fast speeding to its ghostly terminus.

I have never pretended to understand life and its purpose—if it have a purpose—least of all now, as it fades into the chill shades, like the lights of Greenore a few short hours ago. But I have seen enough to warrant the belief that you may mount high as the eagle and your soul nest among the stars. So bend your efforts that . . .

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THE LATE ANTHONY FARLEY

TO THE EDITOR

SIR,

Some of the friends of my uncle, the late Mr Anthony Farley, have urged me to collect his papers and letters in book form for private circulation, or possibly a wider circle.

If I may judge by my own experience, he was

a voluminous correspondent, with wide interests. I would be grateful to those who possess any letters written by him if they would let me have them. I will take great care of them, and, after copying, return them.

Your obedient servant,

GEORGE FARLEY.



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